Great Books of Islamic Civilization

The Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization

THE *Book* OF *Misers*

Al-Bukhalā'

Al-Jāḥiẓ

Translated by Professor R. B. Serjeant

Reviewed by Professor Ezzeddin Ibrahim

THE *Book* OF *Misers*

Dedication

Since this book went to press we have received the sad news of the death of Dr Kamal Nagi. As General Supervisor of the Great Books of Islamic Civilization he played a crucial role in implementing and organising this book and the others in the series. We would like to dedicate this book to his memory.

The Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization

THE *Book* OF *Misers*

Al-Bukhalā'

Al-Jāḥiẓ

Translated by Professor R. B. Serjeant

Reviewed by Professor Ezzeddin Ibrahim

Garnet PUBLISHING

THE BOOK OF MISERS

Published by
Garnet Publishing Limited
8 Southern Court
South Street
Reading
RG1 4QS
UK

Copyright © 1997 The Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization

All rights reserved
No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by
any electronic or mechanical means, including information
storage and retrieval systems, without permission in writing
from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote
brief passages in a review

ISBN-13: 978-1-85964-141-5
ISBN-10: 1-85964-141-5

First Edition 1997
First Paperback Edition 2000
Reprinted 2006

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed in Lebanon

CONTENTS

Foreword vii

About this Series ix

Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization: Board of Trustees xi

Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization: Board xii

Introduction by Ezzeddin Ibrahim xiii

Publisher's Note xvi

Introduction by R. B. Serjeant xvii

The Misers 1
The Story of the Habitués of the Mosque of the Basrah Folk 24
The Tale of Zubaydah b. Ḥumayd 29
The Tale of Laylā al-Nāʿṭiyyah 30
The Tale of Aḥmad b. Khalaf 32
The Narration of Khālid b. Yazīd 36
The Tale of Abū Jaʿfar 48
The Story of al-Ḥizāmī/Ḥarāmī 48
The Tale of al-Ḥārithī 55
Comment of the Discourse of Abu ('l-)Fātik 63
The Tale of al-Kindī 67
The Tale of Muḥammad b. Abi 'l-Muʾammal 78
The Tale of Asad b. Jānī 86
The Tale of al-Thawrī 87
Various Tales of al-ʿAnbarī, Ibn Quṭbah and Fīlawayh 96
The Tale of Tammām b. Jaʿfar 99
Various Tales 102
The Tale of Ibn al-ʿUqadī 110
A Miscellany of Eccentricities 112
The Tale of Abū Saʿīd al-Madāʾinī 118

The Tale of al-Aṣmaʿī 124
The Tale of Abū ʿUyaynah 125
A Miscellany of Stories 127
The Epistle of Abu 'l-ʿĀṣ b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Thaqafī to al-Thaqafī 133
Ibn al-Taw'am's Retort 146
A Miscellany of Eccentricities 171

Appendices 226

Select Bibliography 246

Index 251

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

FOREWORD

THE interrelationship and interaction of human cultures and civilisations has made the contributions of each the common heritage of men in all ages and all places. Early Muslim scholars were able to communicate with their Western counterparts through contacts made during the Crusades; at Muslim universities and centres of learning in Muslim Spain (al-Andalus, or Andalusia) and Sicily to which many European students went for education; and at the universities and centres of learning in Europe itself (such as Salerno, Padua, Montpellier, Paris, and Oxford), where Islamic works were taught in Latin translations. Among the Muslim scholars well-known in the centres of learning throughout the world were al-Rāzī (Rhazes), Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), al Khwārizmī and Ibn Khaldūn. Muslim scholars such as these and others produced original works in many fields. Many of them possessed encyclopaedic knowledge and distinguished themselves in many disparate fields of knowledge.

In view of this, the Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization was established in order to acquaint non-Muslims with the contributions Islam has given to human civilisation as a whole. The Great Books of Islamic Civilization Project attempts to cover the first 800 years of Islam, or what may be called Islam's Classical Period. This project aims at making available in English a wide selection of works representative of Islamic civilisation in all its diversity. It is made up of translations of original Arabic works that were produced in the formative centuries of Islam, and is meant to serve the needs of a potentially large readership. Not only the specialist and scholar, but the non-specialist with an interest in Islam and its cultural heritage will be able to benefit from the series. Together, the works should serve as a rich source for the study of the early periods of Islamic thought.

In selecting the books for the series, the Center took into account all major areas of Islamic intellectual pursuit that could be represented. Thus the series includes works not only on better-known subjects such as law, theology, jurisprudence, history and politics, but also on subjects such as literature, medicine, astronomy, optics and geography. The specific criteria, used to select individual books, were these: that a book should give a faithful and comprehensive account of its field; and that it should be an authoritative source. The reader thus has at his disposal virtually a whole library of informative and enlightening works.

Each book in the series has been translated by a qualified scholar and reviewed by another expert. While the style of one translation will naturally differ from

another, the translators have endeavoured, to the extent it was possible, to make the works accessible to the common reader. As a rule, the use of footnotes has been kept to a minimum, though a more extensive use of them was necessitated in some cases.

This series is presented in the hope that it will contribute to a greater understanding in the West of the cultural and intellectual heritage of Islam and will therefore provide an important means towards greater understanding of today's world.

May God Help Us!

Muhammad bin Hamad Al-Thani
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

ABOUT THIS SERIES

THIS series of Arabic works, made available in English translation, represents an outstanding selection of important Islamic studies in a variety of fields of knowledge. The works selected for inclusion in this series meet specific criteria. They are recognized by Muslim scholars as being early and important in their fields, as works whose importance is broadly recognized by international scholars, and as having had a genuinely significant impact on the development of human culture.

Readers will therefore see that this series includes a variety of works in the purely Islamic sciences, such as Qur'ān, *ḥadīth*, theology, prophetic traditions (*sunna*), and jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Also represented will be books by Muslim scientists on medicine, astronomy, geography, physics, chemistry, horticulture, and other fields.

The work of translating these texts has been entrusted to a group of professors in the Islamic and Western worlds who are recognized authorities in their fields. It has been deemed appropriate, in order to ensure accuracy and fluency, that two persons, one with Arabic as his mother tongue and another with English as his mother tongue, should participate together in the translation and revision of each text.

This series is distinguished from other similar intercultural projects by its distinctive objectives and methodology. These works will fill a genuine gap in the library of human thought. They will prove extremely useful to all those with an interest in Islamic culture, its interaction with Western thought, and its impact on culture throughout the world. They will, it is hoped, fulfil an important rôle in enhancing world understanding at a time when there is such evident and urgent need for the development of peaceful coexistence.

This series is published by the Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, which serves as a research centre under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, Amir of Qatar. It is directed by a Board of Trustees chaired by H.E. Sheikh Muhammad bin Hamad al-Thani, the former Minister of Education of Qatar. The Board is comprised of a group of prominent scholars. These include H.E. Dr Abul-Wafa al-Taftazani*, Deputy Rector of Cairo University, and Dr Yusuf al-Qaradhawi, Director of the Sira and Sunna Research Center. At its inception the Center was directed by the late Dr Muhammad Ibrahim Kazim, former Rector of Qatar University, who established its initial objectives.

The Center was until recently directed by Dr Kamal Nagi, the Foreign Cultural Relations Advisor of the Ministry of Education of Qatar. He was assisted by a

* Died 1994, may Allāh have mercy on him.

Board comprising a number of academicians of Qatar University, in addition to a consultative committee chaired by Dr Ezzeddin Ibrahim, former Rector of the University of the United Arab Emirates. A further committee acting on behalf of the Center has been the prominent university professors who act under the chairmanship of Dr Raji Rammuny, Professor of Arabic at the University of Michigan. This committee is charged with making known, in Europe and in America, the books selected for translation, and in selecting and enlisting properly qualified university professors, orientalists and students of Islamic studies to undertake the work of translation and revision, as well as overseeing the publication process.

CENTER FOR MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION

Board of Trustees

H.E. Sheikh Muhammad bin Hamad al-Thani
Chairman

Members

1. H.Eminence Sheikh al-Azhar, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.
2. Director-General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO).
3. Director-General of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO).
4. H.E. the Minister of Education, State of Qatar.
5. H.E. the Minister of Education, Kuwait.
6. H.E. the Minister of Education, Oman.
7. H.E. the Secretary-General of the Muslim World Association, Saudi Arabia.
8. H.E. Dr Ezzeddin Ibrahim, Cultural Advisor to H.H. the President of the U.A.E.
9. Professor Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Director, Sira and Sunna Research Centre, University of Qatar.
10. Chairman, Arab Historians Union.
11. Professor Cesar Adib Majul, Professor at the American Universities.

Following are the names of the late prominent Muslim figures who (may Allāh have mercy upon them) passed away after they had taken vital roles in the preliminary discussions of the Center's goals, work plan and activities. They are:

1. Dr Kamal Naji, former General Supervisor, Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, Qatar (7 October 1997).
2. Sheikh Jad al-Haq Ali Jad al-Haq, Sheikh al-Azhar, Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.
3. Dr Muhammad Ibrahim Kazim, former Rector, University of Qatar.
4. Sheikh Abdullah bin Ibrahim al-Ansari, former Chairman, Department for the Revival of Islamic Cultural Heritage, State of Qatar.
5. Muhammad al-Fasi, former Honorary Chairman, Islamic University Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco.
6. Dr Abul-Wafa al-Taftazani, former Deputy Rector, University of Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt.
7. Senator Mamimatal Tamano, former member of the Philippino Congress and Muslim leader in the Philippines.

CENTER FOR MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION

BOARD

H.E. Sheikh Muhammad bin Hamad al-Thani
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Professor Osman Sid-Ahmad Ismail al-Bili
General Supervisor, Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic History, University of Qatar

MEMBERS

1. H.E. Professor Muhammad Abdul-Rahim Kafud, Minister of Education and Higher Education, State of Qatar.
2. Professor Ibrahim Saleh al-Nuaimi, former Rector, University of Qatar.
3. Professor Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Director, Sira and Sunna Research Centre, University of Qatar.
4. Professor Husam al-Khateeb, Professor of Arabic, University of Qatar.
5. H.E. Dr Hasan al-Nima, Ambassador, State of Qatar.
6. Dr Hasan al-Ansari, Amiri Diwan, State of Qatar.
7. Dr Ahmad Muhammad Ubaidan (Treasurer) Observer, Advisory Council and Director-General, Trans-Orient Establishment (Doha, Qatar).

CENTER'S ADVISORS

H.E. Dr Ezzeddin Ibrahim
Cultural Advisor to H.H. the President of the U.A.E.

Professor Raji Mahmoud Rammuny
Director of the Center's Translation Committee in the U.S.A.
Professor of Arabic Studies, Department of Near Eastern Studies,
University of Michigan, U.S.A.

INTRODUCTION BY EZZEDDIN IBRAHIM

Abū 'Uthmān ibn Baḥr al-Jāḥiẓ died in the year 255 A.H. (869 A.D.) and left behind him numerous books,[1] among them his most important and famous *al-Bayān wa 'l-Tabyīn* in four volumes, *al-Ḥayawān* in seven volumes, and the single volume of *al-Bukhalā'*, i.e. The Misers.

The book *al-Bukhalā'* remained only in manuscript form until the year 1890, when it was edited and published by the Orientalist C. Van Vloten in Leiden, using a manuscript that was in the Köprülü Kütüphanesi in Istanbul. It was then republished several times in various Arab countries, relying upon Van Vloten's edition.[2] Two other editions appeared in Cairo and are of academic importance. One was done by Aḥmad al-'Awāmirī Bey and the other by 'Alī al-Jārim Bey in the year 1937, in which it is mentioned that they consulted a manuscript belonging to al-Shinqīṭī at the National Egyptian Library, in addition to the book edited by Van Vloten. The second edition was made by Professor Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī in the year 1948, an edition that was undertaken in a scholarly fashion. He had recourse both to the Köprülü manuscript and to another manuscript in Paris which comprised a third of the book. He had also consulted numerous literary sources quoted extensively from the book, thus making up for the lack occasioned by the fact that there are only a few manuscripts of the book.[3]

As for the translations of the book into other languages, parts of it appeared in the year 1931 when the Orientalist O. Rescher published in Stuttgart a translation into German of selections of the book. Then a full translation into French appeared in Paris in 1951, made by the French Orientalist Professor Charles Pellat.[4] As early as the end of the fifties I had seen the British Orientalist, Professor R.B. Serjeant, showing interest in the book *al-Bukhalā'* when he taught many selected passages from it to his students at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University. When the Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization made its commendable decision to have the book translated into English, I apprised them of what Professor Serjeant had been doing, so it was suggested to him that he should undertake the translation and this he accepted to do. The result of this was that a complete translation of the work has been made into English, a translation which I now have the pleasure of presenting to the English reading public as the person entrusted by the Center to undertake the task of revision.

1. Al-Jāḥiẓ, edited by 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn: *al-Ḥayawān* (Cairo 1969) v. 1, p. 5.
2. Aḥmad al-'Awāmirī and 'Ali al-Jārim: *al-Bukhalā'* (Cairo 1937) v. 1, p. 11.
3. Al-Jāḥiẓ, edited by al-Ḥajirī: *al-Bukhalā'*, seventh edition (Cairo 1948) p. 13 ff.
4. Charles Pellat: 'al-Djaḥiẓ', *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edit. (Leiden 1965) v. 2, p. 385.

As Professor Charles Pellat mentioned, there are certain difficulties in translating and fully fathoming a book such as *al-Bukhalā'* when it is to be rendered into a foreign language. Professor Serjeant was naturally faced by this twofold difficulty but he was uniquely equipped for the task and has, I believe, accomplished it in the main with rare success.

The difficulty in translating *al-Bukhalā'*, and even in achieving a fully accurate understanding of the Arabic text, is threefold: the fact that the Arabic text is not free from blemishes; the fact that the book contains numerous references to proper names and places, to customs, types of food, about which it is by no means easy to be exact; and finally, the style of al-Jāḥiẓ himself in the book, by which he sought to address himself both to the educated classes and to the common people, at times employing an elegant style, at others stooping to coarse and out-of-the-way words and idioms.

As to the first and second difficulties mentioned, the editing done by Professor al-Ḥājirī has to a great extent eliminated them through his corrections, marginal references and the explanatory notes at the end of the book, which number no less than two hundred and seventy-eight. As for the third difficulty, the editing done by al-'Awāmirī and al-Jārim in their vocalization and commentaries goes a long way to removing it. Having had in mind to benefit students who were studying the book for purposes of learning, they were particularly careful to give accurate vocalization and to include copious notes.

The translation for which this introduction has been written is a result of a considerable effort, knowing as one does Professor Serjeant's meticulous commitment to the highest standards of scholarship in everything he did. He was keen to make sure that the text he was engaged on was a sound one, especially in those passages where he had found difficulties, and to refer to the original manuscripts of the book. Had he done this, the translation of the book would not have been completed, for he concluded the work at the very end of his life, hardly having put down his pen after finishing the last page than his allotted time was brought to an end. He died—God rest his soul—at the end of April 1993.

As for the other difficulties to be met with in the contents and style of the text, the translator was helped by the precision shown by Professor al-Ḥājirī's editing and in his explanatory notes, and by the efforts of al-'Awāmirī and al-Jārim in their vocalization and commentaries. The translator additionally sought advice of those of his friends who were Iraqi scholars, among them his previous research student, Dr Wadī'ah Najm. He also arranged several meetings with myself for the purpose of discussing various obscure passages, meetings which in fact never took place, as fate intervened. Thus the translation which is now being placed before the reader is as rendered by the translator, without any alteration made to his text.

The translator has attempted, despite his essentially serious and academic disposition, to adorn the translation with a certain lightness of touch in those passages which merited such treatment. In this he turned to advantage his Scottish background—for the Scots are not without a sense of fun—and has by imitating

the exuberant style succeeded in making his translation convey both the contents and style of the original, with complete accuracy but with an agreeable freshness. He was keen that this should be further brought out through the inclusion of illustrations, a number of which he had himself chosen from appropriate sources. He had hoped to add to those, or be able to commission a contemporary artist to complement them, with pictures that would be in keeping with the old illustrations that had been selected. This, and other complementary additions needed for the presentation of his translation, he entrusted to his friend, Professor Rex Smith of Manchester University, who I have learned very kindly agreed to undertake them.

On revising any work of translation there are inevitably passages where there will be a difference of opinion between the translator and the reviewer. Had the two persons concerned actually met as had been arranged, they would have come to an agreement between them about passages where there was a difference of opinion—and which in any case were few in number and not basic to the work. It is my opinion that the translation in question constitutes a valuable addition to world literature and to a genre of creative writing to be found in Arabic literature, a genre characterized by the spirit of novelty, and that it throws interesting light on aspects of social life at the time of the Abbasids.

It is reported that al-Jāḥiẓ, may God have mercy upon him, wrote *al-Bukhalā'* in the final period of his life and that he died in his library surrounded by his books. In May 1993 I received a letter from Dr Marion Serjeant to say that her husband, Professor Bob Serjeant—as he was known to his friends and students (and I had the pleasure of belonging to both categories)—had been engaged on this translation until the very last moment of his life: he died sitting in the garden of his house in St Andrews in Scotland, with the original of *al-Bukhalā'* and this translation in front of him.

*Ezzeddin Ibrahim**

* Previously Professor of Arabic Literature at the University of King Saud and Rector of the University of the United Arab Emirates. He is presently Cultural Adviser to the President of the United Arab Emirates.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The work presented here was translated by the late Professor R. B. Serjeant. Sadly, although the body text was complete, he left a great number of notes which were only in draft form. We are indebted to Professor Rex Smith of the University of Manchester, and his colleague Judith Willson, for their hard work in editing the material and organizing it into its present form of footnotes and appendices.

The bibliography has been compiled by Dr Wadī 'ah Najm, with further work by Rex Smith. Sadly, despite the best efforts of those concerned, it has not been possible to trace all the texts to which Professor Serjeant had referred. We thus present a bibliography from which some details are still missing. We apologize to the readers, but ask for your tolerance in such matters given the difficult circumstances with which we were presented.

Finally, it remains for us to alert readers to the system of cross-references used by Professor Serjeant: cross-reference numbers used within the text refer to the marginal numbers, which correspond to the original Arabic text.

INTRODUCTION
BY R. B. SERJEANT

To introduce the author of *The Book of Misers*, Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr bin Baḥr al-Fuqaymī al-Baḥrī, to give him his full name, a little must be said about the man, but, of course, it is in the book itself that his personality emerges so vividly. Al-Jāḥiẓ was born *circa* 160/776 at Basrah and died in his native city in 255/868–9. He came from a family of the client class attached to the Banū Kinānah of the Meccan Tihama, probably of the Aḥābīsh, perhaps of the mixed Arab and African ethnic group one still finds in the Tihāmah today.

Of his early life little is known but he is associated with groups that met in the mosques and the Mirbad, the celebrated market of Baghdad where scholars met with Bedouin and poets met to declaim their verses or held poetic contests.

Al-Jāḥiẓ acquired a competence in the Arabic language, a knowledge of the traditions of Arabic culture in which poetry plays a large part, and of the speculative theology of the age, in which he took the Mu'tazilī attitude, harmonizing faith and reason. He won the approbation of the Caliph al-Ma'mūn by some works on the imamate justifying the Abbasid accession to power and thereafter spent most of his time at Baghdad and later Samarra, where he devoted himself to writing. In Baghdad he was able to study the translations of Greek philosophers, notably Aristotle, and he began to elaborate his own theological doctrine under the supervision of the great Mu'tazilīs of the day, notably al-Nazzam and Thumamah bin Ashras.

Al-Jāḥiẓ is credited with being the author of some 200 works, of which about thirty are preserved and about fifty others are partially preserved. One category is *adab*, literature of entertainment, notably the bestiary, *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*. Politically he is pro-Abbasid, anti-Shī'ah and anti-Shu'ūbī, the anti-Arab movement. Pellat thinks that once Sunnī reaction against Mu'tazilism had won the day he gave up the struggle for Mu'tazilism and henceforth restricted himself to literary activity. 'The fact that he wrote *Kitāb al-Buchalā'* in the latter part of his life supports this hypothesis,' (Pellat).

I cannot do better than quote Pellat's dictum on *al-Bukhalā'* in his fine article (*Encyclopaedia of Islam* II, (p. 385–7), "Which is at the same time a portrait gallery, an attack on non-Arabs and an analysis of avarice the equivalent of which is not to be found anywhere in Arabic literature. His acute powers of observation, his lighthearted scepticism, his comic sense and satirical turn of mind fit him admirably to portray human types and society, he uses all his skill at the expense of several social groups (school-masters, singers, scribes etc.) generally keeping within the bounds of decency."

The translator's interest in *al-Bukhalā'*, in particular, is for the picture it gives of life in traditional Arab society, resembling as it does the Ḥaḍramī religious capital, Tarīm, he knew almost half a century ago, and where he heard the shaykh 'Abdullāh al-Rahayyam talk on a not dissimilar range of themes . . . from religion to the price of dates. At both London and Cambridge he read it with students as the best way to enter into an understanding of how Arabs think and feel. The very theme, avarice or miserliness brings out their sentiments of generosity and honour and also reveals the straits to which the poor must resort and the penny-pinching necessary to accumulate a modest capital. For the non-Arab it is an introduction to how an Arab conducts himself, the proprieties, table manners etc. The sort of food they eat and their delight in the Arabic language.

In annotating the translation I have aimed at enabling a Western reader, unacquainted with Arabic, who might be puzzled by allusions, or motives of the actors to understand the background. This has involved a fair amount of reference to historical allusions, social background and the religious element, the Qur'an, all of which are constantly at the back of the minds of al-Jāḥiẓ and his readers. Also the ideas and controversies for the time.

For the complete background I must refer the reader to Pellat's *Le Milieu Basrien d'el-Jāḥiẓ* which should really be read in conjunction with my translation. So much has been written on the various aspects of al-Jāḥiẓ's *Bukhalā'* and his other works, his style, his humour etc., that it would be superfluous for me to enter into this. Professor Wadī'ah Najm's bibliography will enable a reader who so wishes to explore further. For Arabs and arabisants many of the notes will be superfluous.

Manuscript sources of al-Bukhalā'

It is astonishing that, as far as is known, so great a classic of Arabic literature should exist in only one manuscript copy, written in *naskh* hand, completed in 699/1300 with very little vocalisation – the *dal* and *ta'* have dots under them. The margin has annotations in various hands most of which Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī describes as frivolous *tafih*. Al-Ḥājirī also thinks that the transcription by a professional copyist is without much comprehension of the text he transcribes. As a result the text is full of errors. It is unknown where it was transcribed. It had many owners until it finally passed into the hands of Abū 'l-'Abbās Aḥmad Ibn al-Wazīr Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad known as Koprülü.

The Paris manuscript is about a third of the whole. It is written in a nice *naskh* hand but appears to be more recent than the Koprülü MS. The copier seems to have allowed himself considerable freedom to adapt or alter the text but the corruptions are different from those in the Koprülü text. Nevertheless it is not without some good readings that help in editing the text.

Quotation from *al-Bukhalā'* is found in a number of writers of the Abbasid

period but with *taḥrīf*. The nearest to al-Jāḥiẓ's time is Ibn Qutaybah but al-Ḥajirī found 9th-century authors like al-Hibshī too corrupt to be any use.

It is remarkable that the first edited text of *al-Bukhalā'* was produced by a Dutch Arabist, Van Vloten with some help from De Goeje and others, a part of the contribution of Western Arabists to the retrieval of classical Arabic literature. The Van Vloten text, however, is full of mistakes, omissions and insertions adding corruption to corruption.

The Egyptian Ministry of Public Instruction commissioned Aḥmad al-'Awāmirī and 'Alī al-Jārim Bey to publish an edition of it, but, except for a few emendations the text reproduces that of Van Vloten without comparison with other MSS. As it was intended for a school-book it was bowdlerized and one can see that confronting schoolboys with some passages might not have been conducive to discipline. The value in this edition for the translator has been in its interpretation of passages where the two editors with their Arabic background have been able to elucidate parts of the text, but sometimes they are mistaken and there are inaccuracies.

Only after having worked through al-Ḥajirī's edition can one appreciate the breadth of knowledge and skill of the editor. There are, nevertheless, passages which would do with commentary from him, but as he has not offered any one must presume that he himself felt uncertain about them. I have drawn extensively on his excellent notes but have added to them material of my own.

Translation of the verse has posed problems. In general I have attempted to render it into rhymed couplets but in a number of cases this has not been possible. It has seemed to me preferable to mark the transition from prose to poetry in this way. A high proportion of the verse in *al-Bukhalā'* is not of high quality and/or expresses ideas or circumstances very foreign to us. This is especially true of the last section which quotes much verse on mundane subjects such as cooking, entertaining guests, etc. Obviously this cannot go into fine language like the translation of heroic verse such as the *Mu'allaqāt*. It is mundane everyday stuff. Lines have to be excessively long to convey the many ideas in the Arabic line. The translation of the verse should convey the sense of the text and not go into high flights of fancy that may read well but do not convey the sense of the original.

Verse is so much a part of Arab life that it has often a utilitarian purpose and is inevitably not of high quality. Much of *al-Bukhalā'*'s verse is hackneyed in theme and diction.

One must expect, therefore, limited success and an uneven quality, but I aim at presenting the text, while trying to avoid stiltedness, yet with the maximum fidelity to the original, consonant with good straightforward English.

R. B. Serjeant

THE MISERS

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

May Allah take you to preserve you under His charge, aid you to show Him gratitude and set you among those to receive His mercy.

You remarked, Allah preserve you, that you have read my book on the classification of the ruses of thieves[1] who rob by day and the detailed exposé of the tricks of thieves who rob by night. (You also remarked) that thereby you have stopped up each crack and fortified each breach, surpassing (others) through what it told you of subtle deceits and strange devices against which it cautioned you—that perchance no stratagem will succeed in countering or cunning manage (to foil).

You remarked (furthermore) that it has been of great benefit (to you) and that it is essential to (devote oneself to) the study of it.

"Tell me", you say, "humorous anecdotes of misers and the logic of stingy persons—those falling under the heading of pleasantry and those coming under that of seriousness—so that, by way of recreation I may turn pleasantry into a means of relaxation and relief. For seriousness involves exertion that impedes reversion to it and he who wishes to benefit by it must keep coming back to it."

You alluded to the witticisms of al-Ḥarāmī/Ḥizāmī, al-Kindī's[2] logic, the Epistle of Sahl b. Hārūn, the "theology" of Ibn Ghazwan, the Oration of al-Ḥārithī and all the amazing tales about them and others that come to my mind—as also why they called miserliness "thrift"[3] and stinginess "economy", why they sought to refrain (from expense), ascribing this to prudence, why they are openly hostile to providing monetary assistance, connecting it with wastefulness, why they consider liberality extravagance and giving freely stupidity, why they are soaring of praise and take little heed of blame, why they consider a person pleased with good name and disposed to give generously feeble (minded), why they judge strength (of mind) to lie with a person with no taste for approbation, unaffected by sarcasm, why they argue in favour of hard as opposed to soft living, the bitter rather than the sweet side of it, why they unashamedly renounce delicacies in their homes yet are eager to be at them in the houses of others, why they encourage one another in miserliness, why they choose the very thing that pins this epithet on them while yet being incensed by it, why they hanker after gain but are parsimonious in spending, why they behave over riches like someone apprehensive they may vanish, not behaving with riches as one who expects them to last does, why they give weight to the element of fear (of poverty) but make little of that of

1. *Ḥiyal al-luṣūṣ*, a lost work apart from passages in al-Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, etc.
2. "Misers" of Basrah or Baghdad, for further details see Appendix 1.
3. *Iṣlāḥ*, see Appendix 2.

hope, despite long enjoyment of sound health and general well-being—for those
2 in good health outnumber the suffering / and blessings are not less than calamities.

How indeed can a man who has marked himself out for misery lead (others) to happiness, how can one who commences by defrauding persons of note set to offering good advice to common folk? Why do they proffer as plea in (their) justification, notwithstanding their powerful intellects, something that the community by common consent finds repugnant? Why do they take pride, despite their wide knowledge, in a thing that (people) by common agreement consider to be low class?

How can he understand, when adducing pretexts for it (miserliness, *bukhl*) and, when finding justification for it, become lost in distant objectives and subtle concepts, yet not comprehend the manifest ignominy of it, disgrace to his name, damage to his reputation and ill effect on his family? How (can this be), seeing that, because of it, it is he who couples toil with small gain, sleeplessness and hard lying, long absence and little profit over a long period, together with awareness that his (prospective) heir is more inimical to him than his (actual) enemy and (considers) that he has a better title to his property than its owner? Is it not he who has displayed ignorance and stupidity, abandoning himself to negligence and folly? Then he argues in support of it with cogent ideas, felicitous expressions, precision of sense, and smooth delivery, much to the point. Yet the parade of ideas and eloquence he makes are inconsistent with his display of ignorance and shortcoming! Why is it possible for him (by virtue of) his intellectual faculties to comprehend the remote and abstruse but be crassly unaware of what looms out close at hand?

You said: "Explain to me what it is that confuses their intellectual faculties, disorders their minds, covers their eyes, shatters that equilibrium, whatever is it for which they resist truth and diverge from the straight path? What is this contrary disposition and incompatible temperament? What is this dense stupidity side by side with this amazing perspicuity? Behind it what rationale lies whereby the conspicuous and obvious is concealed while the minute and obscure is perceived?"

You said: "I am not so much astonished at a person who throws off restraints[4] upon him in respect of miserliness, leaving himself open to censure, content with nothing less than coming to blows with his adversary and with no argument apart from that prescribed in books, nor am I so much astonished at a person bereft of sense, compelled to expose his failings,[5] as I am at one who has recognized his own miserliness and is aware of his excessive stinginess while struggling with himself over it and trying to overcome his nature, but who perhaps suspects that it has been noticed in him and what he is like is well known. So he applies gilt to what will not take on gilding and patches a hole that will take no patching. Hence, as he has noticed his shameful failing and noticed the person who has noticed that shameful failing, were *he* to notice his

4. Lit. "throw off the headstall" of a horse!

5. The allusion is to a Tradition. See Appendix 3.

incapacity to cure himself, settle his humours,[6] recover his earlier good habits
3 and change his defective traits of character till they reverted / to a normal healthy condition, surely he would stop incommoding himself with what he is incapable of accomplishing and he would in fact save what he expends on people who censure him. Nor would he set watchful (critics) over himself, invite poets to his table,[7] consort with postal couriers to the provinces, nor keep up an acquaintance with newsmen[8] and he would be relieved of the bother of formalities and enter within the community at large.

"Moreover what is in his (the miser's) mind when he notices other people's shortcomings when they entertain him to a meal but does not perceive his own when entertaining them, though his own are blatantly evident and those of the person entertaining him are not openly apparent? Why is this same one of them lavish with any amount of gold or silver while stingy with a few bits of bread, though well aware that what he has kept back is paltry beside what he has so lavishly dispensed and if he should want to get, in return for a mere fraction of what he has spent so liberally, many times over that with which he was so mean, it would be forthcoming, a mere trifle, there to hand?"

You said: "You must acquaint me with those things which betray the ostentatious who exceed their means, point out the true facts underlying gilded reputations, tear off the covers from the honour of persons of dubious parentage, distinguish genuineness from hypocrisy, separate the showy but false from the genuine and natural(ly disposed to be generous), so that you, as you maintain, may get to know them, review them to yourself and figure out where they occur and the effects they may have. So if careful consideration of them draws your attention to a failing of which (hitherto) you had been unaware you will recognize where it lies and avoid it. If it be close (to you), evident, recognized by you, you will look (into it) and if your capacity (to act generously) overcomes your (tendency to) miserliness, you will continue entertaining them and gaining their affection by eating with them. If (on the contrary) your preoccupation (with expense) overwhelms the attempt to combat (your tendency to miserliness) you will hide yourself away, alone with your fine fare, entering with the multitude yet living the life of the withdrawn. If the battles between you and your innate nature have their ups and downs and the reasons adduced by both of you are like, similar in form, you will react to discretion by ceasing to expose (yourself to criticism), and to caution by declining to show off beyond your means, and you will perceive that a man who wins safety from censure carries off the prize, one who prefers certainty to risk is acting prudently."

6. The four humours of the human body, phlegm, blood, yellow and black bile, linked with the character and mental state. They must be in equilibrium.

7. To compose laudatory verses on his generosity.

8. Officers whom princes maintained in the chief centres and quarters of cities to keep them informed of events, a function often filled by the postmasters.

You remarked that you would like to be better acquainted with this chapter, that a man of honour needs be more fully instructed in this science, and that if I have made your honour secure from censure and your property from thieves, I shall have achieved for you what a kindly father or devoted mother could not.

You asked me to write down for you Khabbāb's[9] reason for repudiating jealousy and (why he held) that placing a wife at the disposal (of another man) comes under the head of sharing and moral choice, that the vagina of a slave woman under loan is regarded legally as if in service (with her owner), that a wife in many of her respects is similar to a slave woman, that a slave woman is property like gold and silver, that a man has a better right to his daughter than a stranger and is entitled
4 to his sister before a distant (relative), / that a distant (relative) has more justice in being jealous and a close relative may more fitly be rejected,[10] that aiming at increasing (one's) offspring is like trying to increase (one's) tillage—but custom it is that made this alien and religious sentiment that has forbidden it; it is also because people give it an exaggerated importance and subscribe to it more than the repugnance they feel toward it.

(You asked me too) about al-Jahjāh's[11] reason for approving of falsehood in places and denouncing truth in places, raising falsehood to the level of truth and abasing truth to the place of falsehood and (his assertion) that people treat falsehood unjustly in pretending to forget its virtues while keeping its defects in mind, evincing partiality for truth through calling its benefits to mind, pretending to forget its harmful properties, maintaining [averring] that were they to weigh the conveniences of one against the other they would certainly not discriminate between them in this manner nor regard them with those eyes.

(You asked) about Ṣaḥṣaḥ's[12] opinion on giving preferences to forgetfulness (rather than) to over-recollection and (his view) that stupidity is in general more beneficial than perceptiveness, that the existence of beasts with relation to the physical being is happier than the existence of intellectuals—that were you to fatten up a beast and a man of honour or woman of intelligence and motivation, and another (woman), stupid and ignorant, the beast would fatten up more quickly, but (for the same thing) to happen to the woman of intelligence and motivation would take far longer because the intellect is associated with wariness and anxiety, whereas stupidity is associated with empty-headedness and peace of mind. Therefore a beast puts on fat in (the matter of) a few days whereas you will not come across this in a person of high motivation, (forever) anticipating disaster upon

9. Khabbab seems to be a person unknown but his views expressed here are those of the communist Mazdak executed by the Sasanian Nūshirwan with many of his followers in 528/29 A.D. His doctrines surfaced again in Islamic times. See Appendix 4.

10. In tribal Arabia a man has first entitlement to his female cousin's hand.

11. See Appendix 5. Jahjāh's philosophy evidently reflects Sophist ideas.

12. An almost unknown scholastic theologian-philosopher who rejected intellectual life and looked to a physical perfection, belonging to a group which held that the souls of animals enter Paradise.

disaster—even when safe from (any) such thing, knowing no hope till disaster does strike him.

If you should not find chapters on these and other matters depicted in my book entitled *Kitāb al-Masā'il*[13] (*The Book of Problems*) you will come across much of this in the present volume.

Now, regarding what you ask concerning how stingy people argue in justification (of their meanness) and about the droll stories of misers, I shall let you discover these in the (actual) stories about them, if Allah wills, separately, and in their arguments brought together as a whole. This will give more unity to this chapter than a description of what I have myself (experienced) apart from the tales about them that have come to me in (another), way and so also that the book may be more concise and its shortcomings fewer.

I shall commence with the Epistle of Sahl b. Hārūn,[14] then with the eccentricities of Khurāsān[15] folk because of the many things people tell of Khurāsān folk.

In this book you will have three things—exposition of a novel argument, acquaintance with a subtle device, or enjoyment of an astonishing tale. You may laugh at it if you wish and be amused at it if bored with seriousness.

I maintain that weeping is good for the vapours, happy in its outcome when it fits the place, and within reason, without distraction, a sign of tenderness, far removed from hardness of heart. At times it is considered to be (a token of)
5 constancy and intense emotion over friends. / Weeping is one of the most effective means whereby worshippers seek to draw nigh unto Him and whereby the fearful beseech (His) mercy.

A certain sage said to a man worried over the weeping of a boy of his: "Do not worry, for it will clear his throat and be good for his sight." 'Āmir b. 'Abd al-Qays[16] clapped his hand over his eyes, saying: "Shedding few tears, steady gaze, not wet (with tears)!" To Ṣafwān b. Muḥriz,[17] when he wept long and kept recalling his sorrows, it was said: "Long weeping brings a legacy of blindness." To which he replied: "This will be their (the eyes') martyrdom," and he wept till he did turn blind. Many people have been famed for weeping, among whom were Yaḥyā the Weeper, Haytham the Weeper: Ṣafwān b. Muḥriz also was called the Weeper. If this be the case with weeping, and a person who weeps will be in trouble, for it sometimes deprives one of sight, leads to mental disorder and points to weakness of mind, (the weeper) is judged to be (mentally) disturbed and is compared to a sluttish woman and a weakly youth, what then do you think of the laughter of a man who keeps on laughing with the utmost merriment until what gave rise to it terminates? If it should (be considered) unseemly in him who laughs and unseemly

13. A work lost apart from a fragment in the British Library.
14. See p. 8.
15. Pp. 14–21.
16. A Tamīm tribesman of Basrah, a 1st-century ascetic and rhetorician. See Appendix 6.
17. Also a Tamīmī of Basrah, ascetic and rhetorician, died 74/693–4.

in the person giving rise to it, what indeed is to be said of a flower, a (piece of) Yemeni striped cloth, (women's) jewellery, a lofty castle looking as if laughing merrily? Allah, mighty is His name, said: "Has he not been told[18] . . . that He it is who causes laughter and weeping and that He it is who causes to die and makes to live?" He (Allah) put laughter opposite life and weeping opposite death. Allah does not ascribe the unseemly to Himself nor does He bestow what has a deficiency on His creatures. How could the incidence (of laughter) with respect to a person's happiness be aught but important and significant with respect to the well-being of the temperament, for it is basic to the temperament and fundamental to the constitution, since laughter is the first good to show in a boy and he is made happy by it, through which he puts on fat and his blood, the cause of his happiness and the substance of his strength, increases.

Because of laughter's (eminent) properties in the Arab mind they call their children Ḍaḥḥāk (Ever-laughing), Bassām (Smiling), Ṭalq (Cheerful) and Ṭāliq (al-Wajh, Bright of Face). The Prophet, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, laughed and jested. So did the Upright—when they commended (anyone) they said: "He has a laughing tooth, is smiling of evenings, prompt in cheerfully welcoming the guest, of generous disposition and quiet to bestir himself to make welcome." When they censure (someone) they say: "He's always frowning, he's surly, he's grim-faced, he's for ever gloomy, he's disagreeable, puckered of face, sour-faced, (looking) as if his face is steeped in vinegar."

Laughter has its (due) place and measure, as does jesting too. When one overdoes either, or does not allow them full play, over much of them turns into garrulousness and cutting them short ends in frustration. People find fault with
6 the extent only of laughter / and jesting, but when some advantage is desired by jesting, and by laughter the object for which it was roused, then jesting becomes earnest and laughter turns to seriousness.

This is a book over which I am not deceiving you or trying to hide its shortcomings from you because it is impossible to make a complete (survey) of what you want. Nor can it possibly be given its full due as it should because there are numerous stories in which the characters will be recognized when I disclose one word about them, even though I do not name them or intend this for them: so it will be all the same whether I name them or speak of what will give their names away. Among them are friends, intimates, those with the bare necessities of life and those making the best of their poverty—the merit in the benefit to you does not offset the shamefulness of the offence against them. So that is a chapter altogether omitted, but in this respect the book is unquestionably defective for it is the chapter containing most and with the most remarkable relevance to all of you. Other stories are not circulated and were they in circulation there is certainly no indication of their authors, nor are the characters in them recorded in writing but the appositeness of these stories cannot be realized unless the folk of whom

18. Qur'ān, liii, 43–4.

they tell can be recognized so that they are linked with the persons appropriate to them whence these tales originate and those who fit into them. By breaking the connection between the constituent elements and the notions they (convey) half an amusing story gets lost and half a comic tale goes by the board. If a man should pin a comic tale on to Abū ʾl-Ḥārith b. Jummayn/Jummayz,[19] al-Haytham b. Muṭahhar,[20] Muzabbid[21] and Ibn Aḥmar[22]—then it were to go cold on him, it would (still) go down in the best manner imaginable, but were he to conceive a hot spicy comic tale, inherently witty in its own right, then pin it onto Ṣāliḥ b. Ḥunayn,[23] Ibn al-Nawwāʾ[24] and some odious person, it would go cold (on him) and certainly get a luke-warm reception—luke-warm is (far) worse than cold! In similar vein, were you to produce a disquisition on asceticism and an admonitory sermon to people, then say: "This comes from Bakr b. ʿAbdullāh al-Muzani,[25] ʿĀmir b. ʿAbd Qays al-ʿAnbarī,[26] Muʾarriq al-ʿIjlī[27] and Yazīd (b. Abān) al-Raqāshī,"[28] the approbation of it would be twice as great and the (very) ascription of it (to them) give it a freshness and authority it did not previously have. But were you to say: "Abū Kaʿb al-Ṣūfī,[29] or ʿAbd al-Muʾmin, or Abū Nuwās[30] the poet, or Ḥusayn al-Khālīʿ[31] pronounced it," that would certainly not add to its intrinsic merit. Rather it be said that you are mistaken about its estimation so that you may detract from its worth.

I have written down numerous tales for you, many with their author's names attached, others with no attribution to their authors, either out of fear of them or out of respect for them. Had you not asked me for this book I would certainly neither have gone to the trouble (of writing) it nor exposed my words to (bringing me) ill treatment and retaliation. So if there be reproach or weakness (in it) it is your fault but if there be success it is mine not yours!

19. Abu ʾl-Ḥārith Jummayn/Jummayz, born and brought up in Medina, was a well known purveyor of humorous tales. He had associations with the Barmecide (Barāmikah) family who used sometimes to take him to the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd.

20. Also known as Faʾfaʾ, a less successful humorist than Jummayn, rather obscure, about the time of the Caliph al-Mahdī.

21. Abū Isḥaq Muzabbad, another humorist born and brought up in Medina. See Appendix 7.

22. Perhaps a bedouin (Aʿrābī) poet quoted by the Basrans. See *al-Ḥayawān*, ii, 214.

23. A figure hardly known, a humorist, probably a rather poor one!

24. Also little known, perhaps Kathīr b. Ismāʿīl of the Batriyyah Shīʿah sect.

25. An ascetic of Basrah of the Umayyad period.

26. See note 16.

27. A 1st-century ascetic of al-Basrah and transmitter of Tradition.

28. An ascetic and preacher of al-Basrah, of Persian blood and sympathy, who died in the early 2nd/8th century. See Appendix 8.

29. A story-teller (*qaṣṣ*). The profession of *qāṣṣ* was rather low, an entertainer virtually a beggar. See Appendix 9.

30. ʿAbd al-Muʾmin seems unknown but Abū Nuwas is the famous if disreputable poet, specially noted for his wine-songs, not to be taken seriously as a moralist! See Appendix 10.

31. Al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Yāsir, poet and boon companion of the ʿAbbasid Caliph al-Amīn. See Appendix 11.

7

The Epistle of Sahl b. Hārūn[32]

To Muḥammad b Ziyād and his paternal cousins the Ziyād family[33]
When they criticized his doctrine concerning miserliness and kept on searching out his dicta on it in the books (on it by him)

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

May Allah preserve you in harmony, keep you united, instruct you in what is right and make you (to be numbered) among the Upright.

Al-Aḥnaf b. Qays[34] said: "O you gathering of Banū Tamīm, do not rush into strife for those, the very people the most eager to enter the fray, are the least ashamed of flight." (Folk) used to say: "If you want to see a multitude of faults look to a fault finder, for he picks fault in proportion, merely, to the excessive number of faults in himself." Fault begins with your finding fault with what is not a fault. It is unethical to prevent (anyone from listening to) a guide or to incite (them) against a moral counsellor. I only wanted, in what I said, to give you guidance and put you straight, to put you right where you have gone wrong and ensure your continued welfare. If indeed I have mistaken the way to guide you I have not missed the path of good intention in what lies between us. Moreover you may know that I commended to you only what I had elected for myself before you, and for which I am well known in the provinces, independently of you. Great indeed is the onus upon you, out of regard for the respect I accord you, to respect my right to address myself to you on this (matter), and my drawing attention to your duty (to listen?) which I neglected. But you have provided no acceptable excuse in extenuation nor shown the respect you ought. Were it talk of faults, righteousness and virtue we would surely have perceived that we ourselves are not preoccupied with that. It is extremely sad and most unhappy that the lapses of teachers are continually brought up while they forget the inattention of students, and that great significance is attached to the error of the critics while the intentions of those criticized go unheeded.

You have found fault with me for saying to my maid-servant: "Knead dough when leavened as well as you kneaded it when unleavened so that it tastes
8 nicer / and makes it rise more." 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Allah be pleased with him, (himself) said to his family: "Knead the dough for it makes the two flours rise more."[35]

You found fault with me for saying: "He who does not acquaint himself with

32. Sahl b. Hārūn, of Persian origin, was a Shu'ūbī, strongly partisan for the Persians against the Arabs, notorious for miserliness. See Appendix 12 for his biography and the *Epistle*.

33. They belonged, as did Sahl, to the Rāhibūn family.

34. His name was al-Ḍaḥḥāk or Ṣakhr, a Tamīmī chief (*sayyid*) who was famed for his *ḥilm*, forbearance and calm. He came with the Tamīm delegation to the second Caliph 'Umar.

35. The *'Uyūn al-akhbār* quotes the Tradition as: "Knead the dough for it is one of the two things that makes it rise more." 'Umar is the second "Rightly Guided" Caliph.

the places for extravagance with what is cheap, will not recognize the places for economy with what is expensive and not (readily) available." I had been brought some water for ablution in a measure the size of which showed it was quite sufficient (for me), and indeed a little more than sufficient. But when I came to distributing amounts of it over (my) limbs, giving them the requisite amount of water from the quantity provided me I found my limbs needed more than the water (provided). So I learned that had I given economy its place with the first (applications of) water and avoided neglecting this at the beginning, the rest of the water would have been as adequate (in quantity) as the first, and the share of the first limb would have been like that of the last. Yet you find fault with me for this, condemning and denouncing it as shameful with all your might! Speaking of extravagance al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī)[36] said: "It lies in two essential domestic commodities, water and fodder." Nor was he satisfied, in this respect, with water but had to tack fodder onto it as well.

You found fault with me when I put a (clay) seal on a large basket containing a costly amount of expensive fruit and a rare sort of ripe dates, (to keep off) a greedy slave, a lad of voracious appetite, a sluttish serving girl and a shiftless wife. It is no part of the essence of polite manners, nor within the disposition of authority, in the customs of leaders, nor the arranging of lords that the follower and he whom he follows, the lord and he over whom he lords it, should be accorded equal treatment in respect of costly comestibles, choice beverages, expensive clothing, noble steeds, the finest of every sort and quintessence of every kind. It is just as their places in reception salons, how their names come in addresses and the greetings with which they are met, are not of the same standing. How should it be (otherwise) when they are not concerned about the lack of this in the way a potentate would be or care about it in the way a connoisseur would? Anybody who wants to do it can feed his dog on fattened chicken and make his donkey's fodder husked sesame seed! You found fault with me for sealing (it up) yet one of the imams sealed up a leather provision bag of parched barley meal, and he put a seal on an empty bag, saying: "A clay seal is better than suspicion." You keep off a person who affixes a seal to nothing, but find fault with a person who puts a seal on (an actual) something!

9 You found fault with me when I said to the serving lad: "When you add (meat?) to the broth cook it a little more so that we can enjoy both meat given a flavour of broth[37] and filling (ourselves) with tasty soup." For the Prophet, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, said: "When you cook meat add to the water so that if one of you gets no meat, he will (at least) get broth."

You found fault with me for adding (another) sole to sandals and converting a

36. The famous 1st-century preacher of al-Basrah. See Appendix 13.

37. The meat is taken out of the broth. One tears off a piece from the flat round bap of bread in front of one and takes up the meat with it (if not taking the meat directly in the hand). If a person cannot get meat he can at least dip his piece of bread in the broth.

gown into a waistcoat (*ṣudayriyyah*)[38] and when I declared that a double-soled sandal lasts longer, is softer underfoot, affording better protection, repelling haughtiness the more, somewhat like asceticism, (and you found fault with me when I asserted) that patching is part of prudence, combining is synonymous with conserving and being split with waste. The Prophet, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, used to re-sole his sandals, patch his clothing and lick his fingers, saying: "If I were presented with a (sheep's) foreleg I would eat it and if invited to eat a trotter I would accept (it)." Suʿdā, ʿAwf's[39] daughter, patched Ṭalḥah's waist-wrapper and he was the munificent noble of Quraysh, Ṭalḥah al-Fayyāḍ.[40] ʿUmar had leather patches on his clothing—he said: "The burdens of the person who is not embarrassed by old worn clothing are light and he has but little haughtiness."[41] They say: "There is no new garment for anyone not wearing a worn out one."

Ziyād (b. Abī-hi)[42] sent a man to look for a story-teller, stipulating to the man sent out to search that he should be intelligent, right-minded. So he brought him one successfully, and (Ziyād) said: "Were you acquainted with him?" "No," he said, "nor had I seen him till now." "Did you exchange words with him and discuss things before bringing him to me?" said (Ziyād). "No," he answered. "Then why did you pick him from amongst all you saw?" asked (Ziyād). "That day of ours was a scorching hot summer's day", he replied, "but I went on finding out about people's intelligence through their food and what they wore on such a day as that, and I noticed that the people's clothes were new whereas his were merely enough for decency. So I assumed that he (must be a man of) discretion for we know that new things out of place are inferior to shabby clothing."

"To every thing Allah has allotted a measure"[43] and prepared a place for it, as he has allotted men to every era and speech to every rank. He has brought to life by means of poison, put to death by means of susteṇance, choked by water and killed by remedial medicine. Patching a garment combines humility with economy—the converse of this combines extravagance with haughtiness. They claim that economy constitutes one of two gains just as they claim that (having) few children constitutes one of two reliefs. Al-Aḥnaf set the bone of a goat's leg

38. Today a *ṣudayriyyah* is the sleeveless waistcoat worn by certain classes in cities.

39. She is Suʿda bint ʿAwf al-Murriyyah b. Khārijah and Ṭalḥah was the second of her three husbands.

40. Ṭalḥah b. ʿUbaydillāh of the Quraysh tribe of Taym was an early convert to Islam, a well-known historical personage. See Appendix 14.

41. Haughtiness (*kibr*) is greatly disapproved of by the Arabs.

42. Half-brother of the Caliph Muʿāwiyah "on the wrong side of the blanket" but recognized by him. An important political personage, he died in 53/672.

43. Qur'ān, lxv, 3. The contrariness between the outward act and its effect is paralleled by Qur'ān, xviii, 65 seq. in which a seemingly mysterious "servant" of Allah commits a number of evil actions which turn out to be beneficial.

10 and / al-Nu'mān (b. al-Mundhir)[44] gave an order for that. 'Umar said: "Anyone who eats an egg has eaten a hen!" A man said to a lord: "I'll give you a hen." To which the latter replied: "If you (must), make it a hen in lay." Abu 'l-Dardā'[45] counted a bone stripped of (its) meat as the slaughter of a beast.

You found fault with me when I said: "Let nobody be deluded by having lived long, his back bent, his bones brittle and his powers in decline, into (allowing) a generous action on his part to be seen or allow himself to feel impelled thereby to draw his money out of his (own) hands and transfer it to the ownership of somebody else, giving authority over its disposal to prodigality and free rein over it to carnal appetites. For it may be that he turns out to be long lived—he does not know—advanced in longevity—though he does not realize (this). It may be that he will be blessed with a male child—though with no expectation of begetting offspring, or there may befall him some hidden quirk of fate of a sort not occurring to mind nor apprehended by intelligence. So he will (have) to ask for it back from someone who will not give it back and disclose (his) grievance [suffering] to someone who will have no pity on him, however unable he may be to gain (a livelihood), however unpalatable it is to him to earn (his) living." So you found fault with me for that—when 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ[46] said: "Work on Earth as one works who lives for ever and work for your Hereafter as one who dies tomorrow."

You found fault with me when I stated that squandering money in a way that leaves nothing on which to live is sooner to affect money obtained by gambling, money inherited, money picked up by chance and gifts of kings, but saving is sooner to affect money earned and wealth acquired through trading and such of it in which there is exposure to the loss of religion, damage to honour, weariness of the body and anxiety of heart, and (when I stated) that anyone who keeps no account of his outgoing living expenditure keeps no account of his income; anyone who keeps no account of his income loses his capital, and anyone who does not know the value of money is content with poverty and satisfied with humiliation.

I stated that lawful dealing is assured by spending on what is lawful, that evil (dealing) leads to evil (dealing) and good (dealing) invites good (in return), that spending on a fancy acts as a screen between spending on what duties require, spending on what duties require forms a barrier to (spending) on fancies. You found fault with me for saying this, but Mu'āwiyah said: "I have never seen (money) squandered without a neglected duty beside it." Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī)[47] said: "If you want to find out where he got his money have a look at what he's spending it on!" Money obtained by evil (means) is spent in extravagance.

44. The text seems defective here. Al-Nu'mān, king of al-Ḥīrah, used to issue an order for fodder for his horse al-Yahmūm every evening. For this he was criticized in a verse of al-A'shā. (Ibn 'Abd Rabbi-hi, V, 331.)

45. A Companion of the Prophet and early preacher.

46. A wily Quraysh politician who joined the Prophet after the Battle of the Trench, later conqueror of Egypt and Mu'āwiyah's arbiter in the latter's dispute with 'Alī b. Abī Ṭalib.

47. See note 36.

I said to you out of solicitude for you and kindness of regard on my part, and because of your preserving (the rights of) your forebears, and on account of the obligations neighbourliness imposes, as well as partaking with you in the same dish and intimate acquaintance with you: "You live in a world of accidents and
11 calamities against which there is no security and if a calamity / beset the property of any one of you he could come back to find nothing left. So lock up your wealth in various places for misfortune will not befall it all unless all die (at once)." 'Umar, Allah be pleased with him, said of the slave and slave woman, ownership of sheep and camels and other paltry trifles: "Distribute (things susceptible to the disasters) of fate."[48] Ibn Sīrīn[49] said to a sailor: "What do you do about your belongings?" "We distribute them between the ships", he replied, "so if some are lost (at sea) some are safe and were it not that it is mostly safe at sea we would not take our chests to sea." Ibn Sīrīn said: "You reckon her handless but she is a skilful worker."

In my solicitude for you I said: "Riches intoxicate and money is capricious, carrying one away. Anyone who does not preserve his money from the intoxication of riches loses it—anyone who does not tether wealth to apprehension about poverty is neglecting it." You found fault with me for this though Zayd b. Jabalah[50] said: "No one is poorer than a wealthy man safe from poverty. The intoxication of riches is more powerful than the intoxication of wine."

You said: "He stuck to insistence on meeting obligations and on avoiding indulgence in luxuries to the extent that he took to employing this in his verse at the end of his letters, and in his speeches after his main discourse." An example of this is what he said of Yaḥyā b. Khālid:[51]

Foe to ancestral heritage if accident befall,
But when 'tis more prudent, defending it, withholding all.

A further example of this is his line on Muḥammad b Ziyād:[52]

Moral natures twain—God-fearing, shunning all action base.
Despising money when duty to spend it takes place.

You found fault with me when I stated that I give money precedence over learning (*'ilm*) because it is by money that the scholar is sustained and (human) beings supported, before the superior merit of knowledge is realized and that the root is worthier of preference than the branch, and that I said: "If we ourselves

48. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāyah*, III, 196, explains this Tradition as meaning, when you buy slaves or beasts do not pay a high price for one but buy two cheaper of either—then if one dies you do not suffer a total loss. See p. 176 *infra*.

49. A traditionist, but chiefly famous for his book on the interpretation of dreams. He died in 110/728. Cf. *al-Ḥayawān*, I, 130.

50. A leader in the delegation to the Caliph 'Umar and later to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, a rival to al-Aḥnaf b. Qays, at Basrah and Kufah. See also Appendix 15.

51. Yaḥyā b. Khālid was the famous Barmecide wazir of Hārūn al-Rashīd, proverbial for generosity, but deposed and imprisoned by the Caliph, dying in 193/808.

52. Al-Ḥajiri suggests he is Muḥammad b. Ziyād al-Ziyādī, a friend of Sahl b. Hārūn.

see things clearly then it is through having adequate means that we are able to do so. Lack of such means makes us blind." You said: "How can you say this when the head of the sages and chief of the literati was asked: 'Are the ulema or the wealthy more honourable?' 'The ulema certainly!' he replied." (The question) was asked, "How is it that the ulema come to the doors of the wealthy more frequently
12 than the wealthy come to / the doors of the ulema?" "Because of the ulema's recognition of the value of wealth and the ignorance of the wealthy of the value of knowledge," he replied. So I answered: "It is between the (opposing) circumstances of the two that (the line of) division lies—for how can something which all are seen to need and something with which some but not others can dispense, be equal?"

You found fault with me when I said: "The advantage of money over food is just like that of a utensil in the home—if needed it is used and if not needed it is (always) ready to hand. Al-Ḥuḍayn b. al-Mundhir[53] said: "I should like to own an amount of gold as big as Mount Uḥud, upon none of which should I draw." "And what good would that do you?" he was asked, to which he retorted: "Because of the numerous (persons) who would serve me on account of it." He also said: "Get money even if you only derive honour in your heart through it and (it causes) humiliation in the hearts of others, (your) good fortune would be truly immense and (your) gain thereby enormous."

I am not neglecting the conduct of the Prophet, the teaching of the caliphs[54] and the instruction of the sages in favour of those who follow their own fancies. The Apostle of Allah, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, used to commend the rich to take up sheep and the poor to take up poultry.[55] They said: "Your dirham is for your daily bread and your religion is for your Hereafter." They apportioned all things according to religion and worldly matters, then made the dirham one of the two parts of the whole. Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq,[56] Allah be pleased with him, said: "I do detest a household that expends in a (single) day what would maintain [the daily bread] for days." They used to detest people of a household given to eating meat.[57] Hishām[58] used to say: "Put a dirham on a dirham it will mount up to riches." Abu 'l-Aswad al-Du'alī,[59] a sagacious, cultivated and shrewd, astute person, forbade this bastard liberality of yours and this your newly contrived

53. Al-Raqāshī, Abū Sāsān, one of the great chiefs of the Bakr of Rabī'ah and of Basrah; a "knight" and poet, standard bearer of Rabī'ah, at the Battle of Ṣiffin and supporter of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, but a miser. He was asked by a woman: "How can you be lord of your tribe when you are a miser and base?"

54. The four first Rightly Guided Caliphs are intended.

55. This Tradition is in Ibn Mājah, *Tijārat*, 69. Poultry are by some regarded as unclean.

56. The first Caliph, successor to Muḥammad.

57. Cf. the Tradition "Allah does hate people of a house given to eating meat."

58. Umayyad Caliph, reputed miserly. He ruled from 724–43 A.D.

59. Of Basrah, a supporter of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, credited with first formulating the rules of Arabic grammar. He died in 69/688.

munificence, and said to his son: "When Allah[60] puts out His hand to you with (your) daily bread, put your hand out (to do the same) and when He closes (it), you close too! Do not try to vie with Allah in generosity, for Allah is more generous than you." He also said: "A dirham out of lawful(ly acquired money) spent on something right is better than ten thousand in hand." He picked up a branch of the fruit of the *rāk* bush,[61] saying: "You let something like this (go to waste) when it is food for a Muslim man throughtout the day up to night-time?" Abu 'l-Dardā' picked up grains of wheat and an extravagant person stopped him so he said: "Be quiet, son of the 'Abs woman; it is part of a man's wit to be civil over his victuals."

You are neither refuting me nor showing my judgement to be poor—so think first before coming to a decision, and recall what you owe before you recall what is owed you, *wa-'l-salām*.

13 Let us start with Khurāsān folk since people talk so much of Khurāsān folk. Let us pick on Merv folk in particular for this (characteristic) because of the extent to which they are noted for it.

Our friends say: "A Marwazī says to a visitor when he comes to his house and to a companion when he has sat (with him) for some time: 'Have you had your midday meal today?' If he answers: 'Yes,' he says: 'If you hadn't already had your midday meal I'd have given you a fine midday meal.' And if he says: 'No,' he says: 'If you had had your midday meal I'd have poured you five bowls (of date-wine).' So, either way, neither a little nor a lot would come into his hand."

Now I was in Ibn Abī Karīmah's[62] house, he hailing originally from Merv, when he saw me doing the ablution (before prayer) from a pottery jug, and he exclaimed: "Allah forbid! Are you doing your ablution with drinking water with the well there in front of you?" "It isn't drinking water," I said, "only water from the well." "So you'd spoil our jug for us with saltness!" he said—and I didn't know how to disembarrass myself from him.

'Amr b. Nihyawī[63] told me a story: "I took my midday meal with al-Kindī[64] one day", he said, "when in came a man, a neighbour and friend of his, but though we were eating, he offered him nothing to eat, for he was the meanest of Allah's creatures. I was embarrassed in front of him", he went on, "so I said: 'Allah forbid![65] If you were to draw in you might have some of what we are eating along with us.' '*Wallāhi*,' he replied, 'I have already had (a meal).' 'After (swearing by) Allah,' interposed al-Kindī, 'there's no more to be done.' So (his) '*wallāh*' handcuffed his

60. Cf. Qur'ān, xvii, 29–30.

61. *Rāk/arāk* is *Salvadora persica* with pungent dark purple-blue berries (*barīr*), not very palatable.

62. Aswad b. Abī Karīmah, a poet, some of his verse employing Persian words and expressions, sometimes Bedouin in type, sometimes humorous, a friend of al-Jāḥiẓ, a miser.

63. A governor of the Sawād of Iraq of the Caliph al-Ma'mūn.

64. See Appendix 1, not the philosopher.

65. *Subḥana 'llāh*: "I declare the remoteness or freedom of Allah from every imperfection or impurity or everything derogatory to His glory", etc. (Lane), translated as "Allah forbid/forfend".

wrists behind him in such a way he was powerless to take hold (of anything) or stretch out (to take it), leaving him so that he would assuredly be an unbeliever if he did stretch out his hand, or he would have set up something alongside Allah, Almighty is His name."[66]

This story is not about the Merv folk[67] but it is of the same genre as the first story.

14 Thumāmah[68] said: "Never did I see a cock in a village but it was a spitter, taking a grain with its beak, then spitting it out in front of the hen—except the cocks of Merv. For I saw the Merv cocks robbing the hens of any grain in their beaks.[69] So I learned", he remarked, "that their miserliness was something in the nature of the country and the substances in the water (there) in consequence of which it spread to all their livestock."

Then I repeated this conversation to Aḥmad b. Rashīd[70] and he said: "Once I was with a shaykh of the Merv folk in front of whom a small boy of his was playing, so I said to him (the child), either in fun or to try him out: 'Let me have some of your bread to eat.' To which he replied: 'You wouldn't like it—it's sour.' Then I said: 'Let me have a drink of some of your water.' 'You wouldn't like it—it's brackish,' he replied. Then I said: 'Hand me some of this and that.' 'You wouldn't like it,' was his answer (again), 'it's this and that,' till I had totted up a fair number of different sorts of things all of which he would refuse me, making them out to me as displeasing. Then his father laughed and said: 'What is our fault? (This boy)—who taught him what you are hearing?', meaning that miserliness is a natural disposition among them, hereditary in their character and temperament."

My friends allege that a group of Khurāsānīs shared a lodging and did without the benefit of a lamp as long as they could. Then they contributed equally to the expense (of one), sharing in it, but one of them refused to help them out and join with them in defraying the cost. So when the lamp came they would bandage his eyes with a cloth and he and they would stay like this until they went to bed and extinguished the lamp. Then when they put it out they would free his eyes (of the bandage).

I myself saw a body of donkey drivers, about fifty men, among them (Khurāsānīs) eating their midday meal on vegetable fields on the farm[71] land of Qaryat al-A'rāb on the Kufah road, pilgrims, yet of all those fifty I did not see two men eating together, although while engaged in this they were next to one another, conversing

66. This would be polytheism (*shirk*).

67. Al-Kindī was a south Arabian.

68. A famous Mu'tazilite spokesman. See Appendix 16.

69. The proverb says, "Tie up the cock because it picks up a grain and throws it to the hen."

70. An unknown person. Henceforth names of obscure personages will not be commented upon.

71. *Khuḍrah* (mistakenly corrected to *ḥaḍrah* by al-Ḥājirī) means in Iraqi colloquial Arabic, field, farm, vegetables (Wadī'ah Najm). Qaryat al-A'rāb, Village of the Bedouin Arab, according to the geographer Ibn Rustah, is on the road from Wāsiṭ to Suq al-Ahwaz, between Samāwah and the river Tīrīn.

one of them with another. This (situation) in which I saw them is an odd kind of thing to happen to people.

Muways b. 'Imrān[72] recounted to me (a tale) as follows: "A man of them (the Khurāsānīs) said to his companion, either when they were mounted, one on each side of a camel-litter, or when fellow travellers: 'Why don't we eat together since Allah's blessing is present with a community[73] and good fortune attends acting together and people always say: "Food for two / is sufficient for three and food for three is sufficient for four"?' But his companion answered him: 'Were I not aware that you eat more than I, assuredly I would enter this discoursing of yours under the head of disinterested advice!' So when next morning came and he repeated his words to him, he answered him: 'O 'Abdullāh, you have a round of bread and I have a round of bread, and were it not that you have an evil purpose you would not have been so eager to eat with me. You want conversation and sociability—make the basket-tray one, with the round of bread of each of us set in front of the one to whom it belongs—and I have no doubt that when you have eaten your round and half of mine you will find (yours) has been in luck.[74] How it ought to be is that I should find mine (to be in luck) not you (yours).' "

Khāqān b. Ṣubayḥ[75] said: "I went in, one night, to visit a man of the Khurāsān folk, and lo and behold, he brought us a lamp with an extremely fine wick in it and he threw some salt into the lamp oil and on the column[76] of the lamp-stand he hung by a thread a twig in which he had cut a notch so that a place was made in it to which to tie (it). When the lamp was just about to go out he would raise the top of the wick with this (twig)." He went on: "So I said to him: 'What's the idea of tying on this?' 'This is a twig which has been impregnated with oil,' he said. 'If it gets lost and isn't kept carefully I shall have to use one that's dry, and if this becomes my habit with it over a month, enough of my oil to last a whole night would be wasted.' " He went on: "And while I was wondering to myself and beseeching Allah, Almighty is His name, of freedom from evil and not to expose shame, there came in a shaykh of the Merv folk. He took a look at the twig and said: 'O Abū So-and-so, you've run away from one evil only to fall into another! Do you not realize that wind and sun draw out from everything? Wasn't (the twig) fuller (of oil) when the lamp was put out yesterday evening and more absorbent when you lit (the lamp) tonight? Once I was stupid like you! Instead of the twig, Allah keep you in health, tie on a needle or a small packing needle, for moreover a wisp of the cotton of the wick sometimes gets caught in the twig, toothpick or reed, if we adjust it with (one of) them, and comes up with it—which sometimes causes the lamp to go out. Iron is smoother and furthermore is not absorbent.' "

72. A man of standing in Basrah, member of a client family. See Appendix 17.
73. A Tradition (*Ḥadīth*): the hand of Allah is with a group.
74. Lit. *mubārak*, blessed.
75. Associate of al-Jāḥiẓ and miser. See Appendix 18.
76. See illus. no. 5.

"That night", said Khaqan, "I realized the superiority (in respect of miserliness) of Khurāsān folk over all other people and the superiority (therein) of Merv folk to the rest of the inhabitants of Khurāsān."

16 Al-Muthannā b. Bashīr[77] said: "Abū 'Abdullāh al-Marwazī called in to see a shaykh of the Khurāsān folk, and there he was, having just lighted one of those green pottery lamps. 'Nothing sensible, *wallāhi*, ever comes out of you,' said the shaykh to him. 'I rebuked you for (using) stone lamps and you met my complaint by trying to please me with pottery! Aren't you aware that both pot and stone absorb a lot of oil?' 'May I be your ransom (with respect),' said (al-Marwazī), 'I handed it to an associate of mine, an oil merchant, and he tossed it into the strainer for a month till it became so steeped in oil that it will never need more added to it.' 'That's not what I mean,' said (the shaykh). 'The remedy for that is simple and I had already tumbled to it. But are you not aware that the place in the lamp at the end of the wick where the flame is remains continually (exposed to) the burning and drying (effect) of the flame and drying out of what it contains, and as often as (the place where the flame is) is moistened with oil and absorbs it the flame comes back to it and consumes it. This is how (the flame and oil) interact.

" 'If you were to compare the amount of oil absorbed by the part (of the lamp at which the oil burns) with (the amount) drawn in by the edge of the wick, you would certainly discover that the former (part) is greater. Furthermore, the part where the wick burns and the lamp (itself) are perpetually running and dripping. They say that when you set a lamp containing a lighted wick above another with no lighted wick in it, you have only to wait a night or two before you see the lower one full of oil. Take that into consideration too, along with the salt put under the lamp, and the bran put there to level it and tilt it (to make the oil reach the wick), how much oil they (i.e. the bran and salt) exude. All of this is loss and waste which only spendthrifts disregard. Spendthrifts merely ply folk with food and drink—but in the event they do leave something over, even if it be of small account. *You* (on the contrary) do but feed the fire and quench its thirst, and on the Day of Resurrection Allah will make anyone who feeds the Fire fodder for the Fire (of Hell)!'

"Said the shaykh: 'With respect, what should I do?' 'You should use a lamp (*qindīl*) made of glass,' he replied, 'for glass is more retentive than other substances, subject neither to percolation nor absorption; nor does it take on the kinds of dirt that are removable only by hard rubbing or being burnt off by fire—and whichever of the two (alternative methods you employ) it brings back its former absorptivity to the lamp. Glass is more resistant to water than fine gold—yet it is artificial whereas gold is an element (lit. created by Allah) and if, in point of strength, it is superior to it, glass excels it in being transparent.
17 Glass reveals and gold conceals! Because the wick is in the middle, only, / of a glass lamp, the sides of the latter do not get heated by the glow of the burning

77. Al-Muthannā seems to have been of the merchant class and intimate with the ulema.

wick in the way they become heated at the part of the lamp where (the wick) burns. When the rays from the flame fall on the glass substance, the lighted wick and the glass lamp form one single unit (lit. glass lamp), each reflecting light on the other. Compare this with rays falling upon the surface of a mirror or the surface of water, or upon a piece of glass—then see how their light is increased many times over. If they fall on the eye of a man they dazzle and sometimes blind him. Allah, glorious is His name, said: "Allah is the light of the Heavens and the Earth. His light is the likeness of a lighted wick in a niche, the lighted wick in a glass lamp, the glass lamp like a brilliant star lit from a blessed tree, an olive tree, neither eastern nor western, of which the oil would almost (of itself) diffuse light even should no flame touch it."[78] Olive oil in a glass bottle is light upon light, glow added to glow many times over. This is with the (added) bonus of the superior elegance to stone or pottery lamps.' "

This Abū 'Abdullāh was one of the most agreeable of people, the wittiest about miserliness and the most extremely hypocritical.

He was introduced to Dhu 'l-Yamīnayn,[79] Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn, with whom he used to be acquainted in Khurāsān through (his views on) theology, and the latter said to him: "How long have you been resident in Iraq, O Abū 'Abdullāh?" To which he replied: "I have been in Iraq for twenty years, but I have been fasting the whole time for forty years!" He went on, and Ṭāhir laughed and said: "I asked you about one question and you answered me with two requests."

One of the astonishing things about Merv folk is what I heard from my shaykhs once upon a time. To wit, that a man of Merv folk used regularly to go on pilgrimage and trade, staying (always) with a man of the Iraqi people, and the latter would entertain him and provide him with his victuals. Many a time he would say to this Iraqi: "I do wish I might see you in Merv so that I could make you some return for your long-standing kindness and the fresh solicitude you show me each time I come, but here Allah has put you in no need of me."

18 He went on: "Now, after a lengthy interval, business in that province (Merv) came the way of this Iraqi, and one of the things that made bearable enduring the journey and the loneliness of going to a strange place, was al-Marwazī's being there. So when he arrived he went straight on to him in his travelling clothes—his turban, under-cap and (woollen) mantel[80]—to unload his baggage at his house—as a man does with a trusted friend and place familiar to him. So when he came upon him sitting among his companions he bent down over him and embraced him, but he did not find he recognized him nor did he ask him the sort of questions any

78. Qur'ān xxiv, 35, as interpreted by al-Bayḍāwī.

79. Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn b. Muṣ'ab al-Khuzā'ī, a vizier of Caliph al-Ma'mūn who made him governor of Khurasan. See Appendix 19. He means he neither received a gift from him in Khurāsan nor Iraq.

80. A turban (*'imāmah*) is wound round the cap (*qalansuwah*) and over this is worn a cloth (*qinā'*) covering them and probably loosely tied round the chin. The mantel (*kisa'*) is a cloth over the clothing of the body, also worn loosely.

person who had ever seen him would ask. The Iraqi said to himself: 'Perhaps he does not recognize me because of the cloth covering my head.' So he threw his cloth aside and started to ask him things, but he showed even less recognition of him. So he said: 'Perhaps it may be the turban that has got him.' So he snatched it off. Then he told him his name and patronymic[81] and started afresh to ask him things, but he found him utterly failing to recognize him. He said (to himself): 'Perhaps it is just the (under)-cap that has got him.' Al-Marwazī (now) realized that there was nothing left onto which a person making pretence at being unaware and not recognizing, could fasten, so he said: 'If you were to take off your skin I still would not recognize you!' " The translation of these words into Persian is: *Agar az pūsht bārūn biyā'i na-shināstam.*

They maintain that they, the Merv folk, often travel in company with one another, ride together, on each side of a howdah,[82] contribute equally to expenses and club together to buy meat. When they have bought the meat they divide it up before cooking it. Each man of them takes his portion of it, inserts a sliver of palm leaf or a thread into it and drops it into the vinegar[83] and seasoning of the cooking pot. When they cook it each man takes hold of his thread that he has marked with a mark beforehand. Then they share out the broth. Then each one of them goes on pulling, tearing off bit after bit of meat until nothing is left on the cord. Then they collect up their threads and if they club together again they re-use these threads because they have absorbed and are saturated with grease. Their contributing in equal shares to expenses is not by way of wanting to act as partners but because the piece of meat of any one of them is too small to be cooked by itself and because also the labour is lightened and the firewood, vinegar, garlic and seasoning (needed are less), and because a single cooking pot is handier than each one of them cooking for himself in a (separate) cooking pot. They choose savoury stew *sikbāj* merely because it lasts for days and does not soon go bad.

Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām[84] told me, saying: "On one occasion I said to a neighbour I had, of the Khurāsān folk: 'Lend me your frying pan for I
19 need it.' 'I had a frying pan,' he said, 'but it has been stolen.'/ So I asked another neighbour of mine to lend me one. And it wasn't long before the Khurāsānī heard the meat sizzling in the frying pan, and smelt the *ṭabāhaj*[85] (chopped up meat fried with seasoning in deep fat). As if angered he said to me: 'No one on earth is odder than you. If you had told me that you wanted it for meat or fat you'd have found me rushing to bring it to you. I was just afraid you wanted it for broad beans and the iron of a frying pan burns when what is being fried in it is not fatty. How could

81. I am X son of Y, etc.
82. *Tazāmala* also means to bandy *rajaz* verses with one another.
83. Vinegar is used in a *sikbāj, infra*. For the recipe see Appendix 20.
84. Teacher of al-Jāḥiẓ, an exponent of scholastic theology (*kalām*). See Appendix 21.
85. See Appendix 22 for the recipe.

I refuse to lend it you when you wanted (it for) *ṭabāhaj*, for a frying pan, after being returned when *ṭabāhaj* (has been fried in it), is in much better trim than when staying (rusting) in the house.' "

Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām, said: "A neighbour of ours invited us in and served us with dates and ghee of fresh butter, we being at a low table[86] with nothing on it apart from what I've mentioned—the Khurāsānī being with us, eating. I watched him letting drops of ghee drip onto the table, till he had done this repeatedly. So I remarked to a man beside me: 'What's the matter with Abū So-and-so, wasting folk's ghee, eating in company in an unmannerly way and spooning up more than is proper?' 'Don't you know why he does it?' he replied. 'No, *wallāh*.' I said. 'The low table belongs to him,' he said, 'and he wants to grease it, to be like a sort of tanning for it. Already he has divorced his wife, though she is the mother of his sons,[87] because he found she had washed his table with hot water, saying to her: "Why didn't you wipe it?" ' "

Abū Nuwās said: "When we were on the way to Baghdad there was a man of the Khurāsān people in the boat with us, one of their intelligent individuals and *faqīhs*.[88] He was eating by himself so I said to him: 'Why do you eat by yourself?' To which he replied: 'In this situation I am not responsible (for answering) a question. (Replying to) the question is the responsibility of a person who eats with the group. For (such questionings) would be unwarranted inquisitiveness into hidden things.[89] Eating by myself is Fundamental Principle and my eating with others is something additional to the Fundamental Principle.' "

Ibrāhīm al-Sindī[90] told me, saying: "A shaykh of ours of the Khurāsān people was in charge of the Shādharwān Quarter,[91] a man who put (things) to rights, far removed from corruption, bribery and capricious judgement, extremely solicitous of others. He was just the same in his parsimony, miserliness and scrupulousness in his living expenses—he would only eat and drink what bare necessity demanded and he would only drink what necessity demanded. Except that, every Friday morning after dawn he took with him a napkin containing
20 two large rounds of coarse bread (*jardhaqah*),[92] some pieces of cold meat from a *sikbāj* stew, some pieces of cheese, a few olives, a packet with salt in it and

86. See illus. no. 5, a *khiwān*; usually of poplar (*khalanj*) wood.

87. To divorce a wife who has borne a man sons is unusual and not well regarded.

88. A lawyer as opposed to an *'ālim* scholar, exercising his judgement on legal points—well portrayed by al-Jāḥiẓ!

89. According to a Tradition ascribed to the Caliph 'Umar, "We are forbidden *takalluf*", i.e. investigating mysterious matters which should not be investigated.

90. He belonged to a family of Indian origin, as his name indicates. A scholastic theologian (*mutakallim*) and administrator. See Appendix 23.

91. The *shādharwān* appears to have been a collecting basin for water, from which it was distributed to various areas. It evidently gave its name to a quarter of the city and it looks as if the Khurāsānī shaykh was a headman in charge of the regulation of the quarter. His duties would include settling disputes between local people.

92. *Jardhaqah* from Persian, *girdah*, a thick round cake of bread.

another containing lye[93] (for washing the hands), four eggs—an essential, and with him he had a toothpick. He would go on by himself until he came into one of the gardens of al-Karkh and look for a place under a tree in the middle of a field by running water. When he found this he sat down and spread the napkin in front of him and ate, now a bit of this, now a bit of that. If he happened on the caretaker of the garden in question he would toss him a dirham, saying: 'For this buy me' or 'Give me for this, ripe dates'—if it was the date season—or 'grapes'—if it was the season for grapes. And he would say: 'Mind you don't, mind you don't be soft with me over the price, but choose good ones for me, and if you are I shan't eat them and I shan't come back to you. And mind you don't cheat me for the person who is swindled is neither thanked (by the swindler) nor recompensed (by Allah).'[94] If he brought him them he would eat everything he had brought (with him) and everything brought to him. Then he would pick his teeth, wash his hands, then stroll for about a hundred paces, then lie down on his side, then wake, wash himself and go to the mosque. This was his habit every Friday."

Ibrāhīm said: "One day while he was eating in some place or other, a man passed by him and greeted him and he returned his greeting. Then he said: 'Come over here, Allah preserve you.' Then when he saw the man had turned back, retracing his steps, intending to jump over the irrigation channel or cross the stream, he said to him: 'Stay where you are—for haste is the work of the Devil,'[95] and the man stopped. Then the Khurāsānī turned to him and said: 'What do you want?' 'I want to eat the midday meal (with you),' said the man. 'Why so?' he asked. 'And how comes it you are greedy for that? And who allowed you to make free with my property?' 'Didn't you invite me?' said the man. 'Confound you,' replied he. 'Had I suspected you to be so stupid as that, I wouldn't have returned your greeting. The etiquette[96] we observe under such circumstances as these, is when I am sitting and you happen to be passing by, you speak first and give the greeting: "Peace upon you". Thereupon I say in reply to you: "And peace be upon you". And if I am not eating anything I say nothing further—neither do you, and you go your way and I stay sitting as I am. On the other hand, if I *am* eating there is quite another etiquette—namely that I speak first and say: "Come over here", and you reply with the words: "Good appetite!" In this way words will be given for words—but action in return for words and eating in return for speech is not right at all, and this would involve me in an excess of expenditure.' "Thus", he remarked, "befell the man a thing for which he hadn't bargained."

21 In that locality he became known for this and they said to him: "We relieve you

93. Lye, saltwort (*Salsola kali*) or other alkaline plants burned and the ash infused in water, used also for washing clothes.

94. A well-known proverbial saying still current in the Yemen.

95. A common proverb.

96. *Áyīn*, a Persian word, custom, canon, usage. See also note 354.

from giving greetings and the bother of returning them." "That's not what I want," he said. "*I* only want to rid myself of (this) 'Come over here', and the matter will be put right."

A story similar to this is what Muḥammad b. Yasīr[97] told me of a governor there was in Fars, either Khālid Khū Mahrawayhi[98] or some other, saying:

"One day whilst he was in a reception room, busy with his accounts and affairs, having shut himself off with his labours, a poet suddenly made an appearance in front of him and declaimed verses in which he eulogized, praised him immediately and belauded him. When he finished he said: 'Thank you, well said.' Then he turned to his secretary and said: 'Give him ten thousand dirhams.' The poet was so overjoyed that he almost lost his senses. When Khālid saw the state in which he was, he said: 'Do I really see these words (of mine) have made such an impression on you? Alter it to twenty thousand dirhams!' And the poet was nearly jumping out of his skin! When he saw his joy redoubled he said: 'Your joy surely redoubles itself in proportion to the word double. So-and-so—give him forty thousand!' And he almost died of joy!

"When the poet's senses returned to him he said to him: 'You, Sir, may I be made ransom for you (with respect), are a generous man; I realize that each time you saw my joy increase you added to my reward. To accept this from you would be nothing but ingratitude.' Then he called down blessing on him and left."[99]

He continued: "Then his secretary turned to him and said: 'Glory be to Allah. This fellow would have been happy to get forty dirhams from you and you order him to be given forty thousand?' 'Confound you,' he said, 'Don't you want to give him anything?' 'Must your order be executed?' he said. 'You dolt,' he replied, 'This man made me happy with words and I made him happy. The fellow, when he declared that I am more beautiful than the moon and stronger than the lion, that my tongue is keener than the sword and my command(s) penetrate more effectively than a spear-blade, did he thereby put anything into my hands I could take back to my house? Am I unaware that he lied? But he pleased me when he
22 lied to me and I too please him with words and order / him rewards. Even if it is lying it is a lie in return for a lie and words in return for words. But that it should be a lie in return for truth and words in return for action, that would be "the manifest loss", of which you have heard.' "[100]

It is averred that this proverbial saying in the speech of ordinary folk that is

97. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Yasīr al-Riyāshī, a client of the Banū Riyāsh, a Basran poet not of the first rank. See Appendix 24.

98. Mahrawayhi was a client of Caliph al-Hādī, sent by him to deal with supporters of a Shī'ah revolt. It was probably he to whom Khālid was brother.

99. The poet seems to have realized that the governor was playing with him and became terrified.

100. The allusion is to Qur'ān, xxii, 11, in which the phrase "If good befall him he is at ease" occurs—no doubt the governor had this in mind when thinking of the poet's gratification. The "manifest loss" of the verse, however, does not apply to the situation but to the governor's philosophizing.

become current on their tongues: "He regards me askance as if I had eaten two and given him one to eat", is (a saying) of the Merv people only.

He continued: "Al-Marwazī said: 'Were it not that I am constructing a city I would construct a manger for my donkey.' "

He went on: "I said to Aḥmad b. Hishām[101] when he was building his house: 'When Allah wills that a man should lose his money He gives clay and water[102] mastery over him.' 'What has it to do with talk of clay and water?' he retorted. 'When Allah wills that a man should lose his money He makes him hope for sons to succeed him. *Wallāhi*, nothing kills folk, lays their houses waste, leaving their dwellings deserted of inhabitants, but faith in (one's) successors. I consider no protection more efficacious than inability to have children.' "

He continued: "A man of the Marāwizah listened to al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) when he was exhorting people to do good and commending charity (*ṣadaqah*), saying: 'Property never grows less through charity (*zakāh*)', promising them that they would soon have offspring to succeed them. So the Marwazī donated all his property in charity and became impoverished, waiting in anticipation year after year. When he saw nothing come (of it), in the morning early, he went to al-Ḥasan and said: 'A fine thing you've done me! You assured me of (sons) to succeed me. So, relying on your promise, I spent (what I had) and here I am today, since such-and-such a number of years, waiting in anticipation of what you promised (me), without seeing a lot or a little of it. Does the law allow you to do this? Would a thief have done me worse than this?' "

Offspring come sooner or come later. Anyone who donates charity while attaching conditions to it, deserves frustration, for were the case of Marwazī imagined, hardship would have befallen him, people would certainly abandon business, no poor would be left and religious observance would disappear.

23 They say Thumāmah became extremely distressed when his house burned down. Whenever a man looked in to see him he would say to him: "What's burned is soon replaced." When he had many times listened to such words from them he exclaimed: "And I beseech Allah to go on burning down! O Allah, I beseech Thee to burn down—burn down everything I have!"

This tale does not belong to the tales of the Marāwizah but I have included it with those like it.

Sajjādah, i.e., Abū Sa'īd Sajjādah,[103] said: "Some Marāwizah people, when they wear bottines, in the six months during which they do not take off their bottines,[104] tread on the tips of their feet for three months and on their heels for

101. A noble of Baghdad of the Hishām family, noted for affluence and munificence.

102. Puddled clay brick for building.

103. Al-Ḥājirī thinks Sajjadah is to be identified with a man arrested with a group of *faqihs* and exponents of Tradition (*Ḥadīth*) who refused to accept the doctrine sponsored by the Caliph that the Qur'ān is created. They were subjected to the Inquisition (*Miḥnah*) of the Caliph Ma'mūn. See Appendix 25.

104. Because of the intense cold.

(the next) three months so that it looks as if they had only worn their bottines for three months, fearing that the soles of their bottines wear thin or develop holes."

Abū Isḥaq Ibrahim b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām tells a story of a Marwazī, his neighbour, that he used to wear neither bottine nor sandal till the dry *nabaq* (*Zizyphus spina-christi*)[105] was over because of the many stones (of it) on the road and market-places. (He went on) "Once he saw me (when) I (had) sucked sugar canes and collected those the juice of which I had sucked to throw them away, and said: 'If you haven't a *tannur*[106] or children give them to someone who has a *tannūr* and children (to feed). Be careful not to let yourself get accustomed to this habit in the days you still have a small household for you never know what children are coming to you.' "

24 *The Story of the Habitués of the Mosque*[107] *of the Basrah Folk*

Habitues of the Mosque, friends of mine, said: "In the Mosque there gathered people who make a doctrine of economy in expenditure and growth of money, those who amass and refrain from spending it. With them this doctrine became like kinship that unites together in mutual affection and alliance that unites in mutual support. When they met in their circles they used to discuss this subject with one another, debate with each other and study it together, seeking to derive profit (thereby) and pleasure from discussing it."

A shaykh of theirs said:

"The water of my well, as you know, is salty, brackish; the donkey won't go near it, camels won't swallow it, date-palms (irrigated) by it die. The river is a long way off from us and the trouble and inconvenience of fetching sweet water is a burden to us. Some of it we used to mix (with sweet water) for the donkey but he turned sick from it and refractory with me. So after that we took to giving him sweet water, unmixed. I and the ewe[108] often used to wash in sweet water, afraid something like what happened to the donkey's belly might afflict us, and that pure sweet water went to waste. Then a door of prudent management (*iṣlāḥ*)[109] opened itself in front of me—I took myself to the ablution place and on one side of it I

105. The small "apples" of this tree are eaten.

106. A barrel-shaped pottery jar about three feet high with a hole in the foot through which fuel is inserted. Flat dough rounds are inserted from the open top and slapped against their sides, to which they adhere and cook.

107. The Masjidiyyun, Habitués of the Mosque, used it as a kind of club. The Basrah mosque was frequented by a mixture of types, poets, story-tellers, ordinary folk, and seemingly a special group of "misers" (*bakhil*). Their conversations and discussion ranged over a variety of subjects, practical, literary, religious.

108. The "ewe" is a circumlocution for "my wife" which Arabs do not say in public. Cf. "old woman" (*'ajūz*), *infra*.

109. See Appendix 2.

dug a pit, plastered and polished it till it was as if it were hollowed out of a rock, and into it I directed the runway of the (ablution) water. So now, when we wash ourselves, the water runs into it, pure, nothing mixed with it. Were it not for religious devotions the skin of someone after defecation would be more disposed to stink than the skin of someone ritually impure.[110] The amounts of perfume for the skin are just the same, the water is just as it was; also the donkey shows no distaste for ablution water nor are we forbidden to water him with it. I am not aware of any (holy) book forbidding it, or custom (*sunnah*) prohibiting it. For some days we have enjoyed the advantage of this and relieved (our) persons and property of a burden. Folk said: 'This comes through the good fortune (granted by) Allah and His grace.' "

25 A shaykh addressed them, asking:

"Did you hear of the death of Miryam al-Ṣanā'? She was one of those women who practise economy, a person of prudent management." "Tell us about her!" they said. "There is many an amusing anecdote about her", he replied, "and a full account of her would be a long one but I shall tell you one of the stories about her and that will do." "What is it?" they asked, and he went on:

"She married off her daughter, then a girl of twelve, tricking her out with gold and silver, dressing her up in Mervian[111] silk, silks of various colours, floss-silk, silk interwoven with wool and she hung up draperies coloured (red) with bastard saffron, and pounded up perfume, thereby acquiring considerable prestige for her in the eyes of her (own) relations[112] and raising her esteem with her relations-in-law. So her husband said to her: 'How did you manage this, Miryam?' 'It comes from Allah!' she said. 'Stop talking in generalities', said he, 'and produce the explanation! *Wallāhi* you didn't own money in the past nor have you more recently inherited any. You don't behave deceitfully about yourself or your husband's money—unless you have chanced upon a treasure? How ever did this thinking come about? You *have* relieved me of a burden and saved me this great expense.' 'You must know', she said, 'that, from the day I bore her until I married her off, I used to take out in my two hands some of the flour from each bread once a day, and when this amounted to a *makkūk*[113] measure I sold it.' 'Allah has approved of your idea and He set you on the right path,' said her husband. 'Allah has indeed blessed him with good fortune to whom you have been a source of comfort[114] and He has blessed him to whom you were allotted mate. In this and like circumstances the Apostle

110. After sexual intercourse.

111. Merv in Khurāsān was famous for its cotton and silk manufactures exported far and wide. In 'Abbasid times a state manufactory (*ṭiraz*) was established there. Specimens of Merv textiles have been discovered.

112. In Iraq the *khatan* can be someone married to your daughter or sister, and a bridegroom (Wadī'ah Najm).

113. In the 10th century the *makkūk* of Basrah and Wāsiṭ weighed six kilograms (Hinz) but weights and measures in general vary greatly.

114. *Sakan* means something in which one trusts to have ease. It is applied to a wife or children.

of Allah said:[115] "A few she-camels plus a few she-camels make a herd of camels." I certainly *do* hope that your son will grow up inheriting your upright nature and worthy conduct. My pleasure in this (quality) in you is no less intense than my pleasure at this pleasing temperament which, through you, Allah has ensured will be found in my posterity.' "

The folk rose as a body to (take turns at carrying) her bier and they pronounced blessings over her. Then they went back to her husband to offer him condolences on his loss and to share with him in his grief.

. Then one of their shaykhs launched forth, saying:

"(Good) folk don't despise small things, for the beginning of any large thing is
26 small and when Allah wills / to magnify a small thing He magnifieth it, and to make a few multiply, He maketh them multiply.[116] Are treasuries aught but a dirham alongside a dirham and is the dirham aught but a *qīrāṭ*[117] alongside a *qīrāṭ*? Are a mass of sand and the water of the sea not the same? Were not the monies of treasuries only amassed by a dirham from here and there? I have seen a junk merchant who acquired real estate of one hundred *jarībs* in the land of the Arabs. Indeed many a time I've seen him selling a *qīrāṭ*'s worth of pepper and a *qīrāṭ*'s worth of chick-peas and I know that he received only a *ḥabbah* profit on that pepper and a couple of *ḥabbahs* on a pepper stalk, and he went on gathering up large dirhams from small ones until they came to (enough) for him to purchase a hundred *jarībs*."[118]

Then he went on: "For some days I complained of my chest from a cold I had caught. Folk recommended me to take sugary *fānīdh*,[119] while others indicated a cream[120] made of starch, sugar, almond-oil, et cetera. I found it a lot of bother and I disapproved of the expense, hoping to return to good health. While I was struggling through the days a blessed person said to me: 'Get yourself an infusion of bran and sip it hot.' I did sip it and sure enough it turned out to be very good and stave off hunger. That day I didn't feel hungry or have any appetite for the midday meal till noon. Then I didn't finish with the midday meal and washing my hands till I came near late afternoon. So since the timing of my midday meal had come so close to my dinner I did without dinner and realized the right course I should follow.

115. This Tradition is not in the canonical collections but figures as a proverb in early literature.

116. Reminiscent of Qur'ān, vii, 86, "When you were few and He made you many".

117. In Iraq was ideally and in practice one-twentieth of a *mithqāl*/dinar and ideally five but generally three *ḥabbahs*.

118. In modern Iraq (1908) the *jarīb*, the area taken up by 100 palm trees, was in Basrah approximately 0.92 acres (Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, one-and-a-half acres). The junk merchant, probably not of Arab descent and of low class, seems to be acquiring land from the Arab conquerors' descendants, a sort of landed aristocracy.

119. *Fanıdh*, Persian *bānīd*, a sweetmeat made of sugar, barely flour and manna (*taranjubīn*), the latter mostly found in Khurāsān.

120. Reading with Wadī'ah Najm *ḥarīrah* for *kharīrah*, "sorte de bouille qui correspond assez aux crêmes européennes" (Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, (Paris, 1967) 263), but see note 1089.

"So I said to the old woman: 'Why don't you prepare bran for our family every morning? An infusion of it clears the chest and feeding on it provides nourishment and staves off hunger. Then afterwards you dry the bran and it returns to the way it was, so you can sell it, when gathered up, for the same as the original price, and we shall have profited by the difference between the two states.' 'I trust', she said, 'that through this cold, Allah will have combined together many benefits for you through what He disclosed to you in this bran, in which lie both the health of your body and soundness of your means of livelihood.'

"I am not in the least doubt that this advice was part of the good fortune (granted by Allah)."

"You have spoken truly," the folk said. "Such (good fortune) is not acquired through wise judgement but can only be divinely inspired."

Then another shaykh addressed them and said:

"I used to meet with a lot of bother over flint and tinder because, when their
27 edges get broken / and rounded, flint stones become blunt and don't strike sparks properly but produce a sound without kindling fire. Sometimes rain and raindrops dripping (on the tinder) make me act over-hurriedly, sometimes too the stone (against which the flint is struck) would have been wearing away the edges of the flint till it leaves it (curved) like a bow. So I used to buy marcasite[121] at far too high a price and rough flint at a painful cost. Furthermore I had to pay for the work on the flint and there is a bother in dealing with the bit of cotton tinder, for (cotton) has an evil smell. Tinder is not produced from dyed or dirty rags, linen, or worn-out clothing. I used to buy (cotton) at the dearest price. A few days ago I discussed with desert folk and bedouin Arabs the way they ignite fire, using *markh* and *'afār* wood.[122] My friend al-Thawrī[123] who is, as you are aware, one of those correctly informed persons, maintains that (dry) racemes of date clusters will do instead of all those, and he instructed me as to how they are dealt with. I fetch them from my land at no cost and now the servant girl kindles the fire and gets it to flare up with date-racemes only."

Said the folk: "Today many useful lessons have come our way. It was because of this that the ancients said: 'Consultation fertilizes minds!' "

Then one of their shaykhs launched forth, saying:

"I have seen no one like Mu'ādhah the 'Anbarī[124] woman for putting things in their (appropriate) places and discharging her duties to the limit."

"What is the case of this Mu'ādhah?" said they, and he continued:

"In the past year a cousin of hers on her father's side gave her an animal to be

121. White iron pyrites, crystallized forms used in jewellery.

122. The pith of a plant. *Leprodenia pyrotechnica* (*markh*) is used by some Arabs when making fire by rubbing sticks together. *'Afār* wood is used for the same purpose.

123. Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thawrī, a wealthy landowner of Basrah, a cultured man and merchant, only known from al-Jāḥiẓ's writings. He was a habitué of the Ibn Ghurbān Mosque at Baghdad and noted for *bukhl*.

124. 'Anbar, probably one of the tribes of Tamīm.

slaughtered (for the Feast). Now I noticed she was dejected, sad, pensive and downcast, so I said to her: 'What's the matter with you Mu'ādhah?' 'I am a widow woman', she replied, 'with no one to look after me and I don't know how to cope with the meat of slaughtered animals, for those who used to cope with one and deal with it properly have passed on. I am afraid some of this sheep may go to waste for I don't know how to put all the parts of it to their proper uses. I know that Allah did not create anything in this (sheep) or anything else without some use, but mankind is frail for sure. I am not afraid of letting a little go to waste but for the fact that it involves a (whole) lot going to waste.

" 'As for the horns, how to deal with them is well known, namely that they
28 be treated as hooks and nailed onto one of the / ceiling joists (to serve for) hanging up date baskets, camel saddles with their gear and anything at risk from mice, ants, cats, cockroaches, snakes, et cetera. As for the guts, they can be used for the cotton-carding bow and I am much in need of this. As for the skull, the jawbones and the rest of the bones, the way to deal with them is that, after the flesh has been stripped off them, they be broken up, then cooked and the grease rising to the top used for the lamp, dipping bread in, savoury dough (*'aṣīdah*), etcetera. Then these bones are taken to be used for fuel—and folk won't ever see a cleaner fuel and finer flame than (these bones give). Since they are like this they are quicker in (bringing) the pot on, because so little smoke is produced by them. As for the hide—the skin itself forms a bag and the wool has innumerable uses. As for the dung and droppings,[125] once dried they make excellent fuel.'

"Then she said: 'I still have to find a way of using the blood. I know of course that Allah, mighty and glorious is He, forbade only eating and drinking of "blood that has been shed"[126] and that there are places where it is allowed and not prohibited. If I do not manage to find that out so that it can be placed where some use can be made of it, it will become a brand over my heart, a mote in my eye and a recurrent worry to me.' "

He continued: "It wasn't long before I saw she had brightened up and smiled so I said: 'The door of the idea of what to do about the blood must have opened up to you!' 'Yes,' she said. 'I remembered I have in the house some new Syrian cooking pots and they say that nothing tempers and strengthens them better than smearing them with warmed blood and grease so I am relieved that everything has fallen into place.' "

"Then," he added, "I met her six months later and I said to her, 'What were the sun-dried strips of meat from that (sheep) like?' 'My father be ransom (with respect) for you!' she said (in astonishment). 'The season for eating sun-dried meat hasn't arrived yet. I still have the fat, fat tail, sides, bare bones, et cetera, to live on. Everything has season.' "

125. *Farth* is the dung in the intestine, as opposed to *ba'r*, droppings.
126. Qur'ān, vi, 145.

The fellow with the donkey and sweet water picked up a handful of pebbles and threw them on the ground (in admiration). "You don't realise you are an extravagant person", he said, "until you hear tales about the virtuous."

29

The Tale of Zubaydah b. Ḥumayd[127]

From a greengrocer by the door of his house Zubaydah b. Ḥumayd the banker and money-changer borrowed two dirhams and a *qīrāṭ*. When, after six months, he paid it back, he paid (him) two dirhams and three *ḥabbahs*[128] of barley. The greengrocer was angered and said: "Allah forfend! You are owner of a hundred thousand dinars and I am (merely a greengrocer) not possessing a hundred coppers (*fils*). I live by my toil alone and putting by a *ḥabbah* or two. A camel driver shouts at your door, and a porter,[129] but doesn't get near you, and your agent isn't there. I paid you ready money, four dirhams and four barley grains—and after six months you pay me back two dirhams and three grains of barley!" "You're crazy!" replied Zubaydah. "You lent to me in summer and I paid you back in winter. Three (wet) winter grains are heavier than four dry summer grains. I haven't the least doubt that you've got extra!"

Abu 'l-Iṣbagh b. Rabʿī[130] told me in these words:

"I went in to see him a day after he had beaten his serving lads and said to him: 'What's this painful berating and ill-naturedness for? These are just serving lads and are entitled to due respect, proper treatment and upbringing, for they're only children—they need something other than this!' 'You don't know,' he replied, 'that they ate up all the digestive mixture (*juwārishin*)[131] I had in the house.' So I went out to the chief of the serving lads and said (to him): 'Confound you! Why did you take the *juwārishin* and whatever did you want with it?' 'May I be made ransom for you (sir),' he answered. 'I can't speak to you for hunger unless I (sit) leaning (against something)—the *juwārishin*—what would I do with it? Himself never fills his stomach and doesn't need *juwārishin*. We know of a full stomach only from hearsay—from people's mouths. What would we do with *juwārishin*?'

30 With his serving lads he was most insistent on keeping water free of impurities, keeping it cool and wrapping cloths round (the water jars), for his friends and

127. Perhaps Ibn Ḥamīd/Ḥumayd b. al-Qasim al-Ṣayrafī, a slave merchant in the time of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Manṣūr. Zubaydah was also a banker/money changer (*ṣayrafī*).

128. See note 117 *supra*. The *qīrāṭ* was evidently four *ḥabbahs* in value. The barley-corn (*shaʿīrah*) means the *ḥabbah*, lit. grain, seed.

129. To get paid for their services.

130. His name is Dhu'ayb, a Basran of the Ribʿī tribe of Hudhayl, one of the "lads of Basrah, a wanton wit" (al-Hājirī). The libertine poet Abū Nuwās has a line in praise of him.

131. *Juwārish(āt)* a Persian word. Dāwud al-Anṭakī, *Tadhkirah*, Cairo, 1340, i, 103 gives some recipes, "to put the stomach right".

visitors. Ghāzī Abū Mujāhid said to him: "May I be your ransom (sir). Order *the bread* to be wrapped (in cloths) and make it large. Food comes before drink!"

On one occasion he said: "Boy, bring the backgammon table" (*khiwān*)—intending to say "the backgammon *board*", and Ghāzī said: "We're more in need of the bread table!"

One evening Zubaydah got drunk and donated a gown to a friend of his. Once the gown was on his drinking companion he was afraid Zubaydah would have second thoughts, for he knew it was a drunken slip of the tongue. So he went straight home and put on a black *barnakān*[132] belonging to his wife. When morning came Zubaydah asked about the gown and looked for it. "You donated it to So-and-so," they said. So he sent to him, then went to him and said: "Don't you realize that an intoxicated man's gift, buying, selling, charity (*ṣadaqah*) and pronouncement of divorce do not hold good in law? Furthermore, I dislike to receive no credit and that folk should attribute this to intoxication on my part. So give it back to me in order that I may present it to you of free will when sober, as I dislike any of my property to go to waste futilely!" When he grasped he was resolve to keep it he addressed himself to him and said: "You, man! Folk jest and make fun without being in any way reprehended for it—so hand back the gown, Allah grant you good health." Said the man to him: "This is the very thing I feared. I didn't set foot to ground until I had made a neck-opening[133] in it for my wife and I have added to the sleeves and cut away the front parts. If after all this you want to take it back, take it back." "Yes," he said, "I'll take it back as it will do for my wife as it did for yours." "It's at the dyer's," he said. "Hand it over!" said Zubaydah. "It wasn't I who gave it him," countered the man. When he knew it was lost he said: "My father and my mother be ransom to the Apostle of Allah with regard his dictum: 'All evil was assembled in one room and locked in and the key to it was drunkenness.' "[134]

31

The Tale of Laylā al-Nā'iṭiyyah

Now about Laylā al-Nā'iṭiyyah,[135] the lady who belonged to the extremist group of the Shī'ah, she went on patching a gown of hers, going on wearing it until the gown became all patches and the original fabric had all gone. She darned her mantle and wore it until she was wearing only a mass of darns and the original mantle had gone. Hearing the line of the poet:

132. Ḥaḍramī *birkālah*, woman's black cotton dress.

133. A man's gown would cover up to the throat; a woman's gown would have a deeper and wider opening.

134. This Tradition is not in the canonical collections.

135. Laylā al-Shaybāniyyah al-Nā'iṭiyyah was at the head of the extremist Shī'ah, believing in metempsychosis. Nā'iṭ is a mountain in north Yemen, about twelve kilometres east of 'Amrān, in the Hamdān district. She was then of Yemeni descent?

Wear your gown while you can find the neck opening[136]
And, when you can't find it, change it for another thing.

she said: "Well in this case I certainly am ham-fisted/full of holes[137] for, *wallāhi*, I sew a rent together and a rent in a rent and I cobble a hole and a hole in a hole!"

32 I went—Abū Isḥāq al-Naẓẓām, 'Amr b. Nuhaywī/Nihyawī[138] and I, with the intention of conversing in the cemetery[139] and discussing together a subject in speculative theology. We passed by the reception room of Walīd al-Qurashī, it being on our way. When he saw us he walked along with us and when we had crossed the Ditch we sat down in the court of his enclosed palm garden which has a very dark shade, cool and comfortable—this because of the thickness of the wall and compactness of the parts (constituting it) and the distance of the impact of the sun's (rays) upon it from his garden itself. We engaged in conversation at some length and ran on into various aspects of theology, so that before we noticed it was midday, and we had a scorching hot day at that. When we set about returning and I felt the touch of the sun and the way it beat down on my head I was certain I would develop a fever so I said to Abū Isḥāq, al-Walīd being beside me listening to my words: "Al-Bāṭinah[140] is a long way off from us and this is a disagreeable day—here we are at an hour which melts everything. It would be a good idea to turn off to al-Walīd's house and pass the siesta there and eat whatever happens to be at hand, and it will be a day of relaxation. Then when we come to the cooler part[141] of the day we will go our various ways—otherwise it is death inevitable!" Raising his voice al-Walīd exclaimed: "As for doing things in this way—that can not be, *wallāhi*, at all. Take that to heart!"[142] "What's 'this way' ", I said to him, "Allah have mercy on you, of which you disapprove in us? Isn't it only a case of need and necessity?" "You said it in a derisive tone," he retorted. "How could I say it in a derisive tone when my life is in your hands and besides, I know you?" I said. But he got angry, snatched his hand roughly from my hands and left us. Nor, *wallāhi*, has he apologized to us for the offence he gave us up till this very moment. I have never seen anyone but him make a (mere) nothing a pretext for the refusal (of hospitality) except the way Abū Māzin treated Jabal al-'Ammī/al-Ghamr.[143]

136. In the many holes in it.

137. A play on *kharqā'* which has both these senses, *khurq* a hole.

138. Friend and fellow student of al-Jāḥiẓ.

139. A *jabbān* is an open space, a cemetery, usually *jabbānah*, in the open outside the town. The Ditch would be round the city.

140. Al-Bāṭinah in Basrah and Kufah, the conglomeration of houses and markets.

141. The *'aṣr*, late afternoon, 3 o'clock or so.

142. Iraqis say *khalli-hāfī galb-ak* of something not supposed to be disclosed to others (Wadī'ah Najm). Not improbably the sense to be understood here.

143. Perhaps a singer nicknamed al-Jabal (the Mountain) satirized by Abū Nuwās but a companion of his at drinking parties.

Jabal went out by night from the place where he was. He was afraid of the night watch and did not feel safe from footpads so he said: "What if I were to knock on Abū Māzin's door? Then I could spend the night at his house in the room next to (the entrance), or in his entrance hall, without causing him any inconvenience,
33 until the true dawn[144] comes and I'll go out among the last night walkers."/ So he knocked on his door the knock of a confident person, the knock of a person who presumes (all will be well), the knock of a man afraid the night watch will catch up with him, or a footpad follow close behind him, a man in whose heart was pride in being self-sufficient and certainty that he would cause no bother. Abū Māzin was in no doubt that someone with a present had knocked and came down at once.

When he opened the door and saw Jabal (it was as if) he had seen the Angel of Death! So when Jabal saw him dumbfounded, uttering not a word, he said to him: "I was afraid of being molested by the night watch and rushed on by footpads so I turned to you to pass the night in your house." At this Abū Māzin pretended to be drunk and made show to him that his inability to speak was just because of his drunken condition, and (he pretended) to have lost control of his limbs and made his speech disjointed, saying: "Drunk, *wallāhi*, I am, *wallāhi*, drunk!" Jabal said to him: "Be as you like! We're now in the days of the season when it is neither winter or summer and I don't need the roof (to sleep on) so that I'd bring discomfort on your household because of the heat and I don't need a coverlet so that I would bother you to look out a cloth (to wrap myself in). But I am, as you can see, tipsy from drink, full up with food. I have just come from So-and-so's house and his house has the best of everything. I only want you to let me have one little nap in your entrance hall, then I will get up with the first of the early morning risers." He continued; Abū Māzin let his eyes droop, his jaws drop and tongue loll. Then he said: "Drunk, *wallāhi*, I'm drunk. *Wallāhi*, I don't know where I am, I don't understand what you're saying."

Then he shut the door in his face and went back in, never doubting his excuse had been made plain and he had hit on a happy idea when he lighted on this ruse.

If, in this book, you come across any solecism, or speech wanting in grammatical inflection, or an expression misapplied from its proper sense, you should know that I have left it out because grammatical inflection makes this kind (of story-telling) obnoxious and removes it from its own sphere, except when I retail some of the speech of those misers with pretensions to intellectuality and of such avaricious ulema as Sahl b. Hārūn and the likes of him.

34 *The Tale of Aḥmad b. Khalaf*

Aḥmad b. Khalaf al-Yazīdī[145] was one of the delightful misers. On the day his father died he left in his house two million six hundred thousand dirhams and a hundred

144. The second or true dawn (*fajr*) that arises after the false dawn has disappeared.

145. A friend of al-Jāḥiẓ.

and forty thousand dinars which he and his brother Ḥātim divided up before he was even buried. Aḥmad alone received a million and three hundred dirhams and seventy thousand dinars, gold coin, fine *mithqāls*[146] of full weight, apart from goods.

I said to him when he had just inherited all this money: "What kept you late last night?" "Nothing, *wallāhi*," he said, "except that yesterday evening I dined at home." So I said to our friends: "If it weren't that it's a long time since he ate at home, and that this is unusual of him, he wouldn't have had to use the word 'except' and add a qualification such as this, for where do people dine but in their own homes? When faced by a question such as this a man merely says: 'No, *wallāhi*, except that So-and-so detained me', and 'No, *wallāhi*, except that So-and-so invited me'. But as for making an exception or qualification this is what cannot be, except in circumstances of which I spoke earlier."

On one occasion he said to me, opening up the matter without seeking an opinion or for any reason that had cropped up:

"I see that in winter you prepare some of this *muthallathah*[147] gruel for your family. It is most beneficial and expands a lot. It replaces the midday meal and fills the stomach, enabling it to dispense with dinner. Any sort of gruel dispenses with the desire for *nabīdh* or to drink water. A person who sips at hot (gruel) breaks out in sweat and sweat exhausts the skin and relieves stomach troubles. It satisfies the physical appetite completely and inhibits craving for food. It warms too, and, inside your stomachs, it will stand you instead of the charcoal for the brazier outside (them). Supping (gruel) hot does away with the need for fuel and wearing padded clothing. Fuel blackens everything and (the smoke) makes it stink. It is quickly consumed (lit. digested), and a person using it is exposed to the risk of fire and a lot of money goes into paying for it. Worst of all is that whoever becomes
35 accustomed to it will be warmed by nothing else! So, Abū 'Uthmān, stick / to *muthallathah* for you must realize that it is to be seen only in the homes of shaykhs and men of experience. Take this from a physician of experience and person offering sincere advice."

He used always to be at his brothers' houses—his brothers were folk of verdant pasturages taking their turns at watering, people of opulence, ready with gifts.[148] They used to shower him with kindness, and spoil him, bringing him fruit, letting him decide (what he wanted), not doubting that he would invite them on some occasion and they would make his house a place of amusement and hilarity.[149] But when his apparent failure to take notice of this and putting them off with promises

146. The *mithqāl* means the dinar. Cf. note 117.

147. *Muthallathah* is not found in an appropriate sense in the dictionaries but the *Lisān* calls it a stew of flour, water and oil/fat, which may be sweetened. In Iraq, Dāwūd Chelebi says today it is wheat ground two-thirds of a complete grinding without being boiled.

148. These phrases are used figuratively to mean that they kept a good table and took their turns at providing entertainment.

149. *Nashwah* is used by the pre-Islamic poet Imru'u 'l-Qays in the sense of wine. In the context here it means hilarity, drink-inspired.

had gone on for a long time, they hinted at it to him but he pretended not to notice. They spoke openly to him (about it) saying: "Make it just one invitation without a sister to it." When their patience and his was exhausted he prepared a nice light tasty little meal for them that cost him nothing and caused him no bother. When they had eaten and washed their hands he turned to them and said: "I ask you please, by Him, nothing is greater than He, am I better off and richer now or before you ate of my food?" "We are in no doubt", they replied, "that when the food was still in your possession you were richer and better off." "Am I closer to poverty now or at that time?" he asked. "Nay," they said, "you are now closer to poverty." "Then who will blame me", he said, "for (not) inviting folk who had brought me closer to poverty and distanced me from wealth and the more I invite them the closer I am to poverty, the further from wealth?" Following this analogical reasoning (*qiyās*) of his it was his opinion (*ra'y*)[150] that he should break off relations with anyone who asked him to give him a drink of water, who took a fig from his enclosed garden, or stalk from his donkey's feed.[151]

He passed by the dealers in kids—this being in the breeding season—and the season roused in him the craving for a bargain,[152] his appetite stirring in proportion to the possibility, in his mind, of a bargain. So he despatched a serving lad of his called Thaqf (Sharp), he (himself) being well known, to buy him a kid, while he stood not far away. The lad was not long in coming back, running, gesturing with his hand and beckoning with his head: "Go, don't stay!", but he did not leave his place. When the lad came up to him he said: "Confound you! Would you have me run away like a wanted man?" "Here's a strange thing!" the lad said. "The kid costs ten (dirhams). Are you in this class? Move on, move on!" There was his serving lad considering it extraordinary that a kid should sell for ten dirhams. A kid selling at ten is exceptional only with us at Basrah because of the prosperity and low prices (here), but at al-'Asākir,[153] if anyone finds that exceptional he does so only by way of its cheapness and the low price of it, not for any other reason.

36 So don't say that Abū 'Uthmān[154] behaved badly to his friend—nay rather, he did not treat him badly until the latter himself saw fit to do so. Anyone with this trait and given to such a way of acting is not to be trusted by an associate of his, and what man is perfect? *Wallāhi*, this is exposure of a man's faults, persecution, obscenity and disloyalty!

You must realize that through these stories I seek only harmony with him and to win his approval and affection. I have feared that, in many people's opinion, I am a spy on his behalf and a person set by him to lay traps for others. This is because I am one of his dearest friends, the most persuasive in discouraging folk

150. Analogical reasoning and opinion are the third and fourth sources of Islamic law.

151. Cut straw and lucerne, according to Lane, but perhaps sorghum cane is intended by "stalk".

152. Because the kids were young and plentiful.

153. 'Asākir, the plural, probably means the districts of the town of 'Askar Mukram in Khūzistān.

154. Al-Jāḥiẓ.

from cadging from him and the best of them in putting a stop to motives for coveting his money. Nevertheless, though I act to the best of my ability he will not disclose his gratefulness to me. If this book of mine goes beyond the frontiers of Iraq he will be grateful or else refrain. Perhaps his fame for the infamous (i.e. *bukhl*) in this province, in his eyes has relieved him of commending and recommending his opinion. And how (not) since he considers that both Sahl b. Hārūn and Ismāʿīl b Ghazwān[155] spend extravagantly and that both al-Thawrī and al-Kindī require to be restrained (from squandering their property)? I have heard that he said: "Were you only to recognize that part of the honour of the angels for which Allah is responsible is that He did not inflict the maintenance (of a family) upon them or children's demanding 'Give, give!', you would indeed appreciate their rank and status."

37 A friend of mine told me, saying:

"I looked in to see So-and-so and there was the table still set down in its place and folk having just eaten and washed their hands. I stretched forth my hand to eat, but he said: 'Despatch the wounded but don't interfere with the whole!', adding: 'Attack the part-eaten fowl and the chicken with its leg pulled of, but the one still whole—don't touch it, and the same with the round of bread that is part eaten and on which some soup has been spilled.'

This same man also told me: "One day I ate at his house, his father being there as well as a little boy of his who kept coming and going. He went to and fro a number of times, all the time watching us eating. 'What a lot you eat,' he said. 'May Allah not fill your bellies!' His father—grandfather of the boy—exclaimed: 'My son, by the Lord of the Kaʿbah!' "

The Master of the Armoury at the Karkh Gate told me, saying:

"The proprietor of the bath house said to me: 'Come—shall I tell you an extraordinary thing about Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAffān? He used to come at dawn every day and enter the bath-house and when I was away from the tub of lime-depilatory paste he would rub it on his pubes and armpits, then cover himself with a waist-wrapper, then get up to wash it among the crush of people. Then subsequently he would come at the same time as that and apply it to his legs and part of his thighs. Then he would sit wearing his waist-wrapper and when he found I wasn't noticing he washed it. Then he would return at the identical time and rub another part of his body with it. He went on at dawn every day applying depilatory paste (to his body) till he had done me out of a complete application (of paste).[156] I have even seen him with lime paste on the band at the top of his trousers.' "

38 He would not think of cooking in Syrian cooking pots or cooling water in Madhār[157] jars because the latter sweat and the former absorb.

155. Ibn Ghazwān was reputed for avarice (*bukhl*) but otherwise little is known about him, except that he mixed with the scholastic theologians. Al-Ḥājirī cites some of his apothegms.

156. *Ṭalyah* might refer to the tubful of paste.

157. Madhār is the capital of Maysān, lying between Wāsiṭ and Basrah. He means the jars are porous; they are green in colour.

Abu 'l-Jahjāh al-Anūshirwānī[158] told me, saying:

"Abu 'l-Aḥwaṣ[159] told me, saying: 'We used to take breakfast with al-Bāsiyānī and he used to lift his hand before (we had finished eating) and lie down on his carpet saying: 'We feed you for the sake of Allah only: we seek of you neither recompense nor gratitude.' "[160]

39 ## *The Narration of Khālid b. Yazīd*

This Khālid b. Yazīd,[161] a client of the Mahālibah,[162] is Khālawayh al-Mukaddī the Mendicant. Through miserliness, mendicancy and (his) great wealth he was successful in acquiring sums of money such as none other attained.

He used to lodge in the Shiqq (Quarter) of the Banū Tamīm[163] without their recognizing him. Now one day, when he was in a reception room of theirs, a beggar stopped by him and he put his hand into (his) bag to take out a copper (*fals*)—the copper coins of Basrah being large—so he mistook a Persian dirham (for it) without noticing till he had put it in the beggar's hand. When he did notice he asked for it back and gave him a copper. "We don't consider this lawful", it was said to him, "and furthermore it is shaming." "Shaming with whom?" he retorted. "It wasn't through your wits that I gathered this money together in order to disperse it through your wits! The fellow isn't a poor man of the (silver) dirham class. He's a poor man of the copper class. *Wallāhi*, I recognize him merely by judging from his looks!"

"Can you really recognize mendicants?" they asked. "How shouldn't I be able to recognize them", he answered, "seeing I was a *kājār*-gypsy in my young days?[164] At that time there wasn't a rascal claiming to have suffered in the holy war (*makhṭarānī*)[165] nor one with a sob-story (*musta'rid*) left in the land whom I

158. See Appendix 5.

159. Al-Aḥwaṣ al-Riyāḥī. Bāsiyān is a place in Khūzistān.

160. Qur'ān, lxxvi, 9.

161. For Khālid b. Yazīd and the rogues of the underworld see Appendix 26.

162. The Āl al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah were a powerful family in southern Iraq, and of Basrah in particular. They were of the Azd of Oman and had been supporters of the Umayyads.

163. The Tamīm were a large tribal group of north Arabia. They no doubt controlled and administered the quarter in which some had settled in Basrah.

164. The categories of rogue that al-Jāḥiẓ lists in this paragraph are described in detail *infra* and the translation of the technical terms for them are based on these descriptions (pp. 43–4). Some figure in C.E. Bosworth, *The Mediaeval Islamic Underworld*, Leiden, 1976–8, an excellent survey of this side of the background to *al-Bukhalā'*. It is unimportant that Abū Dulaf's *Qaṣīdah Sāsāniyyah* belongs to the 4th/10th century and Ṣafiyy al-Dīn al-Hillī's poem with the same title to about the first half to the 8th/14th century, and that al-Jāḥiẓ died in 255/868–9, for the class of society they depict is essentially the same. The thieves' cant or slang used by them is not easy to understand and of course does not appear in the lexicons; not infrequently it has to be translated by inspired guesswork.

165. The words *makhṭar*, a journey, and *khuṭṭār*, travellers returning from a journey (C. de Landberg, *Glossaire datînois*, 614) suggest a derivation for *makhṭarānī*.

didn't outdo, nor importunate beggar (*shaḥḥādh*),[166] feigner of madness (*kāghānī*), faker of ulcerated limbs (*bānuwān*), hanger-on at gates (*qarasī*), a howler (*'awwā'*), contriver of deformities in infants (*musha"ib*), faker of afflictions to his private parts (*filawr*), confidence trickster (*mazīdī*), shammer of blindness (*isṭīl*) but came under my hand. For thirty years I have eaten bread given in charity (*zakūrī*)! Not a *Ka'bī* or mendicant is left the headmanship over whom I haven't seized—even Isḥāq[167] Slayer of the Freemen/vulva, Bamjawayh Camel-hair, 'Amr al-Qawqīl, Ja'far Punting Pole, Qarn (Horn) of his Penis, Ḥammawayh Elephant-eye, Shahrām Ayyūb's Ass, Sa'dawayh Fornicator with his Mother!" By all this he aimed, when he realized their greed, insatiable graspingess and
40 ill-neighbourliness, / at bringing them to abandon hope of extracting money from him. He was a story-teller,[168] scholastic theologian, eloquent and crafty. Abū Sulaymān the One-eyed and Abū Sa'īd al-Madā'inī the story-tellers were among his lads.[169]

He it was who, on his death-bed, said to his son:[170]

"I leave you what you may eat if you are careful of it—which you won't eat if you squander it. What I bequeath you by way of sound practice, the proper management I have demonstrated to you and the frugal living to which I have habituated you, are of far greater value to you than (all) this money. Had I placed in your hands some instrument through which to protect the money against yourself through every expedient—in which case you would have been unable to assist yourself—you would have derived no benefit from that. On the contrary that very ban would turn into an instigation to you (to get round it), and that same restriction would be an affront to your obedience.

"I have reached, on land, to where the earth ends and, on sea, the furthest extent to which vessels have reached. It is no loss to you if you should not see Dhu 'l-Qarnayn.[171] Put from you the notions of Ibn Sharyah[172] for he was only

166. The *shuḥḥādh* may be beggar minstrels, the south Arabian *shuḥḥa*.

167. A pretty collection of rascals, and tough characters with nicknames: Banjawayh from Persian *panj*, five (?), Qawqīl, sense unknown, Punting Pole (reading *mardī kalak* (Wadī'ah Najm)). Al-Ḥājirī suggests that Ishāq, Slayer of Freeman might be Simāq the general of the Zuṭṭ who were in rebellion in 269/882 and brigands in the Basrah region, but it seems more likely to be slayer of the vulva (reading *ḥir* not *ḥurr*) in the context. Several of the names have sexual allusions, perhaps including Ayyūb's Ass.

168. Al-Jāḥiẓ shows us the poor and *quṣṣās* begging at the doors of the mosques. The profession of *qāṣṣ* started as preaching but gradually became disreputable. Apart from sermons, they drew on tales of the Jāhiliyyah (the pagan age), Judeo-Christian legends, etc. See note 29.

169. Belonging to a ring controlled by Khālawayh al-Mukaddī(?)

170. The speech to his son is quoted by the geographer Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, IV, 169, seq., with some variations.

171. Dhu 'l-Qarnayn (the Two-Horned) of Qur'ānic legend, identified with Alexander the Great.

172. 'Abīd b. Sharyah al-Jurhumī, a shadowy figure born before Islam but living till the time of the Umayyad Caliph Mu'āwiyah who questioned him on the ancient history of Arabia and Persia. He came from Ṣan'ā' of the Yemen.

acquainted with the outward aspect of history. Had Tamīm al-Dārī[173] seen me he would have taken the description of Byzantium from me. I guide more straightly than the sand-grouse,[174] than Du'aymīṣ, than Rāfi' al-Mikhashsh.[175] I have passed the night in the waterless desert with the *ghūl*, married the *si'lāh*, replied to the disembodied voice, stolen secretly from the *jinn* to the *ḥinn*, hunted the half-human *shiqq*, conversed with the *nisnās*, kept company with the *ra'iyy* familiar spirit,[176] recognized the deceits of the *kāhin* and trickery of the discoverer of lost or hidden things (*'arrāf*), what is resorted to by the geomancer (*khaṭṭāṭ*)[177] and the augur (*'ayyāf*) by the flight of birds, what say those masking prognostications by examining the shoulder-blades of sacrificial animals (*aṣḥāb al-aktāf*), and I am conversant with astrology, augury by bird-flight, movement of animals (*zajr*) and tossing of pebbles (*ṭarq*) and 'faith-healing' (*fikr*).[178]

"It was not by story-telling and mendicancy that I gathered this money together, nor yet through contriving by day and enduring (the rigours of) the night. So great an amount never is amassed except through undertaking (the hardships) of sea voyaging, work for the Authority,[179] or by alchemy of gold and silver. I have become thoroughly acquainted with 'the Head' and I understand the application of the elixir properly (?).[180] Did I not know the limitations of your mind and were it not

173. A late adherent to the Prophet at Medina, of the Lakhm of Syria, but a well-known person to whom a legend is attached that the jinn showed him the anti-Christ (al-Dajjāl).

174. "As the crow flies"—so does the sand-grouse.

175. A name only known through the saying: "A better guide than Du'aymīṣ of the sands". Rāfi' b. 'Umayr of Ṭayyi' acted as guide to the famous general Khālid b. al-Walīd on his epic journey through the desert from Iraq to Syria to fight the Byzantines.

176. These are various sorts of jinn. The *si'lah* can have intercourse with the opposite sex of human kind and beget offspring. The *ḥinn* is a tribe of the jinn created before Adam, half man half jinn, the lowest of the jinn; the *shiqq* has half the form of a human being; the *nisnās* is somewhere between the *shiqq* and man; the *ra'iyy* is a familiar spirit that teaches man divination, enchantment and astrology. A great lore is attached to these supernatural beings, which may be conveniently consulted in Toufic Fahd, *La Divination arabe*.

177. The *kahin*, the pre-Islamic priest-diviner etc. exercised the important function of arbitration through supernatural devices; the *'arrāf* is more of a diviner; the *khaṭṭāṭ* draws lines or circles in sand. Most, perhaps all, of these practices still exist in our time.

178. Elsewhere al-Jāḥiẓ speaks of treatment/therapy of thought (*'ilāj al-fikr*) which is susceptible of a number of interpretations—my rendering is provisional.

179. Al-Sulṭān—the 'Abbasid administration(?).

180. The elixir is the essence with the power to transmute base metals into gold. For "the head" al-Ḥajirī offers an ingenious suggestion based on a passage from Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*, which states that the Chaldeans acquired the head of a man they thought had the shape of the planet Mercury, by ruse or assassination, and steeped it in oil and borax. When Mercury was at its height the spirit of that man would return to the head and speak with his tongue about what had happened and answer questions posed to it. There is a somewhat obscure reference in Abū Bakr b. Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, *al-Fatawa al-nafi'ah*, Cairo, 1379/1960, 310, a Ḥaḍramī work, in a treatise against various forms of magic, but the author is probably drawing on much earlier sources. "Strange things like the cutting off a man's head and putting it back and their addressing it after cutting it off and before putting it back". This is practised by circles of magicians (*ahl al-ḥilaq fi 'l-ṭuruqāt* (?)).

that I would be a cause of your self-destruction, I would instruct you even at (this) hour in the thing whereby Qārūn[181] attained to what he did and whereby Khātūn[182] enjoyed the riches she did. *Wallāhi*, your bosom, in my opinion, isn't wide enough to hold a friend's secret—so how (could it hold) what prudence cannot bear (not
41 to disclose) and which no bosom has the capacity to retain? Keeping a confidential conversation secret and the custody of treasures of jewels is easier than keeping (the secrets of) knowledge hidden. Were you to be trusted, in my opinion, against yourself I would make spirits enter bodies and you would (actually) be seeing. Since what you comprehend is only through description and hearsay you are not certain about it. But I shall hand down to you knowledge of (animal) perceptive (faculties), melting of marble, making of mosaic, recipes for the manufacture of Qal'ī[183] swords, alloys of Yemeni swords, manufacture of Fir'awnī[184] glass and the process of sublimation in the way it should be done—if Allah lets me rise from this collapse.

"I am not satisfied with you even if you are above (my other) sons nor have I any confidence in you though I am (near to) joining (my) forefathers, because I have not tested you severely. I have consorted with sultans and paupers, served caliphs and mendicants, mixed with ascetics and assassins, passed my time in prisons as also in salons for instructive conversation, milked the full and the scant udders[185] of fortune and encountered a destiny abundant in marvels. Had I not entered by every gate, sailed with every wind, known happiness and hardship until tribulations showed me the consequences of affairs and brought me closer to (understanding) the mysterious way in which they work I would not have been able to gather what I am leaving to you or retain what I have kept for you. I don't pride myself so much on collecting it as I do on (managing to) keep it, because some of this money I did not obtain through prudence and smartness—I preserved it for you from the temptation of building, the temptation of women, the temptation to seek adulation, the temptation of ostentation and the hands of agents—for they are an incurable disease.

"It is not for any great love for you that I commend it to your keeping but because of my utter detestation of the qadi. For Allah, Almighty is His name, gave qadis power over children's property as a punishment for the children, because a child's father, if rich and powerful, likes to parade his riches and power in front of him (the child), while if he be poor and weak, he likes to find relief from his shame and trouble

181. Qarun, in the Qur'ān, a minister of Pharaoh, fabulously wealthy; because of his special knowledge he became one of the founders of alchemy.

182. Wife of the Khāqān of the Turks in the time of Bahrām Gūr.

183. Qal'ī swords were made at Kalah, where there was a fortress (*qal'ah*) in which there was a lead mine. Kalah was the first place to which you came, returning from China (Yāqūt).

184. i.e. Pharaonic glass, perhaps manufactured by a secret process.

185. Lit. here "I have milked the teats that yield plenty of milk (i.e. the fore pair) and the hind pair that do not". I have taken *dhikr* in the sense of *mudhākarah* which is rendered following George Maqdisi, *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West*, Edinburgh, 1990, 208.

he (causes). If he falls into neither category he likes to find relief from his wheedling. (Children) are not grateful to him who gathers (money) for them, provides for them, protects them and sets them up, nor do they bear with him on whom Allah has imposed the duty (of obedience) to Himself. Truth, in the immediate present, lacks the quality of sweetness as falsehood in the immediate present does not have the quality of bitterness. If you are one of them—the qadi for you—but if you are not of them—Allah is on your side. If you follow my path the property of others will be deposited with you and you will become the guardian of others—if you diverge from
42 my path your property will come to be deposited / with others, and another guardian over you. On a day when you are filled with eagerness to waste your money and for someone else to become guardian over it because of (your) intense eagerness to do so, you are bereft of hope. Fathers resort to expedients to keep property in the hands of their children through *waqf* endowment and qadis resort to expedients against their children by 'making search'. How quick they are to release a restraint (on a property) and recognize mature age when they want to purchase (it) from them, and how dilatory they are with them when they want their properties to be diverted to their (own use).

"You son of a slut—even if you are above the sons of this age, being possessed of a competence has spoiled you, your awareness of the amount I am leaving you corrupted you—and what adds to this is that you were my first born and the last child of your mother.

"Were my money to be lost I would sit as a story-teller or roam in faraway countries like I used to do as a mendicant, with flowing white beard, the voice coming from my throat loud and pleasing, of handsome presence—ready to accept what happens. If I ask tears of my eyes, they respond—a little kindness from people is better than a lot of money—I pass the day-time in turning over schemes and I practise the craft of the night,[186] or come out as a bandit, or act as a spy for tribes and a spokesman for them. Enquire about me of the vagrants of al-Jabal/Jibāl,[187] the Zawāqīl[188] of Syria, the Zuṭṭ[189] of the Marshes, the heads of the Kurds, the bold insolent desert Arabs, the assassins of the Baṭṭ[190] river, and the robbers of al-Qufṣ—and enquire about me of the Qīqāniyyah and the Qaṭrīs, and enquire about me of the deceivers (?)[191] and the butchers of al-Jazīrah,

186. In robbery.

187. The mountain province of the east of Iraq.

188. The Zawāqīl are thieves about whom little is known.

189. The Zuṭṭ are an Indian race, Jāt, in Sind and the Punjab who migrated to al-Baḥrayn and the marshes of southern Iraq. Some were sent to Syria in Umayyad times and settled in Antioch. The Zuṭṭ in Oman today are not really distinguishable from the settled Arab population.

190. The Baṭṭ river is at al-Ahwāz of Khūzistān. Al-Qufṣ is a mountain in Kirmān province after which these people take their name. They were apparently Yemenis of Azd Oman with a bad character for violence and robbery. The Qīqāniyyah from Qīqān in Sind, bordering on Khurāsān, were robbers. The Qaṭris, from al-Qaṭr near Qurnah, al-Ḥājirī suggests may have been corsairs.

191. *Al-Mutashabbihah*, "these who assume a likeness to", presumably thieves or murderers. The butchers of al-Jazīrah (of Iraq) may have been a craft corporation, or possibly simply murderers.

how I deal out blows at the occasion for blows, my cunning when the occasion demands cunning, how I (conduct) myself on patrol, how steadfast my spirit is at the sight of the advance guard, how wide awake I am when sentinel, how I speak in front of the Sultan when I am taken, how patient I am under whipping, how little I grumble when imprisoned, how lightly I bear my shackles when loaded down by them. From how many a Dimas have I tunnelled out, from how many a Muṭbaq have I broken out,[192] how many a prison have I suffered. You were not with me and Kardawayh al-Aqṭa' at the battles of Sindan nor the troubles in Ceylon (Sarandīb) you did not see me at the battles in the Multan
43 war.[193] Enquire about me of the Katīfiyyah / Khalidiyyah, Kharrabiyyah and the Bilāliyyah[194] and the other peoples of rocks and stony places and those of hoe, head (of sheep) and rope (*fās wa-rās wa-miqlas*).[195] Who was it encountered Azhar Abu 'l-Niqam? The last to face me was Ḥamdawayh Abu 'l-Arṭal[196] (Man of Pints). I was the one to answer (the challenge?) of Mardawayh b. Abi Fatimah and I broke off with the Banū Hāni'.[197] I was the first to drink *gharbi*[198] wine made of fresh ripe dates, hot, and clarified wine, cold, the first in Iraq to drink in a pottery drum, to make the dry measure[199] a gourd; the first to plant (?) sweet basil[200] on gourd leaf, the first to play with the spinning top among the Badu

192. Dīmās and Muṭbaq are the names of prisons, the former of the formidable Umayyad governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj, the latter of the 'Abbasid Caliphs.

193. These battles are not recorded by the Arab historians. Sindan (modern Sanjan) is fifty miles north of Bombay and ten stages from the capital of Arab Sind, al-Manṣurah, and the port Daybul near Karachi, on the Mihrān (Indus) river.

194. The identity of these four categories is obscure. The Khalidiyyah are possibly to be identified with the Khaladiyyah (?), called by al-Tha'alibī a group of beggars and rogues (*mukaddun* and *sāsāniyyūn*). The Bilāliyyah were a band of fighters at Basrah at the outbreak of the Zinj, Negro revolt (869–83 A.D.) probably named after Bilāl the black slave of the Prophet. The Kharrabiyyah (from *kharraba*, to destroy?) were a sect of Shi'ah reputed not to look askance at theft and robbery (al-Ḥājirī). If one reads al-Khuraybiyyah as in the essays of al-Jaḥiz, they would have probably taken their name from al-Khuraybah, a quarter of Basrah. They all appear to have been trouble makers who emerged at any disturbance.

195. Perhaps to be interpreted as cultivators, shepherds and sailors/fishermen. The *qalas/qalas*, is a rope in a ship's rigging, a term still in use in the Gulf, but *miqlas* means a shepherd's crook or stock.

196. A *riṭl* is applied to one of the vessels of the vintner, a pint measure (Lane), etymologically the same word as litre.

197. These persons and perhaps the Banu Hāni' appear to have been characters of the underworld. Abū Niqam would mean "the man who takes vengeances"—an assassin for hire?

198. A wine of crushed unripe dates. A man drinking it remains sober till he goes out in the fresh air and wind, whereat he loses his reason (Lane, *Lexicon*, 2242).

199. The pottery drum, shaped like an hour-glass, has two ends. The *qanqal* is a very large dry measure holding perhaps two *riṭls*. A verse of al-Taymi runs:

On the Thursday of wine I drank
In cup, goblet and *qanqal*-tank.

200. *Shāhisabaram*, sweet basil, is grown in houses.

and to exclude the four-sided drum from drums.[201] The tunneller[202] was only a demolisher until I grew up and the footpad only a robber of persons until I became adult.

"You are a lad and your tongue runs away with your reason and your sharp mind your prudence. Adversity has not taken a bite at you and you have continued to enjoy good fortune. The property is extensive but your capacity is limited. There is nothing, in my opinion, to be feared more on your behalf than holding a good opinion of people. So suspect your left hand of designs against your right, your hearing of designs against your sight. So fear the servants of Allah in the measure of what you hope for from Allah.

"The first inkling He vouchsafed to my heart, that my money was protected from me, and that the growth of it was my duty (to promote) and that Allah will protect my posterity after me, was that one day when my cravings got the better of me and I took out—one day—a dirham to achieve my object and my eye lighted upon the stamp it bore and upon the name of Allah inscribed on it. I said to myself: 'Then I must be one of the losers, straying from the right way! if I do indeed let a thing which has "There is no god but Allah" on it, leave my hand and house and, in exchange for it, accept an object upon which there is nothing (of this kind). *Wallāhi*, the believer takes off his signet ring on which is (engraved) "Allah is sufficient for me" (*Ḥasbī Allah*) or "I trust in Allah" (*Tawakkaltu 'ala 'llāh*), and he thinks he has left the shelter of Allah, mighty is His name, until he puts the signet ring back in its place. It is only a single ring, but I want to spend a dirham upon which is inscribed Islam as it is.' "

And forthwith he died. His son shrouded him in some of his worn-out rags, washed his body in water from the well and buried him without digging a trench[203] inside the grave or a niche in the side of it, and returned (to the house).

44 When he got back to the house he looked at a green jar hanging up and said: "What's in this jar?" "There's nothing in it now!" they replied. "What was in it before today?" he asked. "Ghee," they answered. "What used he to do with it?" he asked. "In the winter we put some flour in a copper pot which we prepared for him and sometimes he would pour some ghee onto it." "They preach but they don't practise," said he. "Ghee is brother to honey. Isn't it just through (spending on) ghee and honey alone that folk ruin their property? *Wallāhi*, if it weren't that the jar is worth something, I'd simply just break it over his grave!" "He turned out worse than his father", they commented, "and we didn't suppose there could be even worse than he was."

201. The four-sided drum is said to be unlawful.

202. The *naqqāb*, a house-breaker who makes a hole in the clay wall of the adobe house to enter and steal. Khalawayh al-Mukaddī, one deduces from the context, organized them and the footpads in a group.

203. It is preferred in Islam that ablution be made from running water whenever that is available (Wadi'ah Najm). The *ḍariḥ*, rendered "trench" is an oblong excavation in the middle of a grave, Lane, *Lexicon*, 1785.

The *makhṭarānī* is a person who comes to you in the guise of an ascetic and shows you that Bābak[204] had cut out his tongue from the roots because he was a muezzin there (Ādharbayjān). Then he opens his mouth wide like a person yawning does and you cannot see he has any tongue, while all the time he actually has a tongue as big as a bull's—I am one of those tricked by him. The *makhṭarānī* must have someone with him to speak for him—or a board or sheet with his case and tale written on it.

The *kāghānī* is a person who feigns madness, pretends to be an epileptic and foams at the mouth so that no doubt is entertained of his being incurably insane because of the violence he does himself, to the extent that the wonder is that one afflicted with such a malady such as he can stay alive.

The *bānuwān* is a person who stands at the gate and slides back the (wooden) bolt. They say that *bānū/bānuwā* in Arabic means *Yā mawlāyya* (O my lord).

The *qarasī*[205] is a person who binds his leg and forearm tightly with a tourniquet and passes a night in this condition. Then, once it is swollen and the blood strangulated, he rubs it with a little soap and dragon's blood, applies a few drops of ghee to it and covers it with a rag, leaving part of it exposed. So anyone seeing it does not doubt but that it is an ulcer or some other affliction like an ulcer.

45 The *musha"ib* is a person who, when a boy is born, contrives to blind him, or give him a distorted hand or foot, or make him shorter in one arm, so that his family can beg of folk with him. Sometimes his mother and father bring him so that he can undertake to do that to him in return for a heavy fee, because thereupon he turns into a revenue producing estate and an income. The couple would either earn a living by means of him or hire him out for a fixed rent. Sometimes they hire out their children to a person going to Ifrīqiyyah for a large amount of money and he uses them in begging the entire way, paying at once if he is a trustworthy person, but if not he will arrange a guarantor for the children and the charge (for the hiring).

The *filawr* is a person who resorts to his testes to deceive, making show to you that he has scrotal hernia—sometimes he makes show to you of a cancer or large furuncle, or incontinence in them—or sometimes he will make a show of having this in his anus by inserting a throat and part of the lung (of an animal?) into it. A woman sometimes does the same to her vulva.

The *kāghānī*[206] is a beggar lad when he thrusts, having some trait of beauty, and performs two acts at once.

The '*awwā*' (howler)[207] is a person who begs between sunset and evening when he has a fine voice and languorous throat.

204. Bābak was a rebel in the Ādharbayjān region, of the Khurramī sect which professed such doctrines as transmigration, incestuous marriage etc. The rebellion commenced in 201/816–7. Bābak was executed in 233/838.

205. Perhaps the name is drawn from the Arabic *qarasa*, to clot, congeal (of blood).

206. For *kāghān* (cf. *kāghānī supra*) read *kākhān* with al-Bayhaqī, *al-Maḥāsin wa-'l-masāwī'*, evidently a sexual pervert.

207. '*Awwā*' is to howl like a dog or wolf. It seems to be a cant name of a derisive nature.

The *iṣṭīl* is a person pretending to be blind. If he likes he will show you both his eyes have sunk into his head, if he likes he will show you they water and if he likes he will show you that he does not see because of the sinking into his head and pannus corneae.

The *mazīdī* is a person who goes round carrying small dirhams with him, saying: "These dirhams have been collected for me towards the price of a pile bedcover (*qaṭīfah*)—add to them, Allah bless you." Sometimes he carries an infant boy with him, sometimes he asks for a shroud.

The *musta'riḍ*[208] is a person who sidles up to you, a man of presence, wearing
46 correct clothing, apparently nearly dead / with shame, afraid that someone who knows him might see him. Then he addresses you, speaking secretively to you.

The *muqaddis* (sanctimonious) is a person who stands by a dead man, begging for a shroud for him. He stands on the road to Mecca by a dead donkey and a dead camel, claiming that it was his, averring that by its death he has been frustrated from performing the pilgrimage. He has learned the dialect of the Khurāsānīs, Yemenis and Ifrīqiyyans and become acquainted with the towns, roads and men of those countries. When he wants, he is an Ifrīqiyyan, when he wants, he is of the Farghānah folk and when he wants he hails from whatever district of the Yemen he likes.[209]

The *mukaddī* (mendicant) is a person given up to mendicancy.

The *Ka'bī* is linked to Ubayy b. Ka'b of Mosul (al-Mawṣilī). He was their headman after Khalawayh for a year, over water (carrying?).

Zakūrī is charity bread whether bestowed on prisoner or beggar.[210]

The above is commentary only upon what Khalawayh spoke of, and they outnumber, many times over, those of whom I have spoken,[211] but it is not permissible that I introduce anything that is in any way irrelevant to the book.

47 Yaḥyā b. 'Abdullāh b. Khālid b. Umayyah b. 'Abdullāh b. Khālid b. Usayd lifted up in his hand a round of bread from his table (*khiwān*), then tried it in his hand while folk were eating, to see how heavy it was. He then said: "They allege the (rounds of) my bread are small but what whore's son could eat two rounds of this bread?"

Abū Isḥāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām, Quṭrub[212] the Grammarian, Abu 'l-

208. Abū Dulaf calls the *musta'riḍs* the "amīrs of the folk". The verse runs: "And the one who intercepts people, retailing his misfortunes and asking for money, having smeared his eyes to induce a factitious flow of tears."

209. Abū Dulaf also describes the rogue who "*qaddasa*" but attributes some at different types of rascality to him. Ifrīqiyah is Muslim North Africa.

210. *Zakkara* means to beg from door to door (*kaddā 'ala 'l-abwāb*).

211. Perhaps they were dealt with in greater detail in al-Jāḥiẓ's lost work (see note 1). Edmund Bosworth's study reveals the profusion of types of rogue, and even al-Bayhaqī, drawing on al-Jāḥiẓ, includes several kinds of rogue not mentioned in *al-Bukhalā'*, but perhaps taken from the lost work.

212. Muḥammad b. Mustanīr, a Basran of the 2nd century, influenced by Mu'tazilite views current there.

Fatḥ tutor to Manṣūr b. Ziyād and I were at So-and-so's table. The table was a piece of onyx (black and white marble), the crockery, china (Ṣīnī) bowls with splashes of several colours, or Kīak[213] poplar wood; the dishes were excellent, appetising and nourishing, delicious; each round of bread in its silvery whiteness was like the new moon and a (highly) polished mirror—but—there was only one per head! Each man ate up his round all but a scrap, but they were not replete so as to withdraw their hands, nor were they provided with anything (more) so as to complete eating and their hands stayed poised, picking and pulling (at what was still left).

When they had gone on for some time like this, the host turned to Abū 'l-Fatḥ—there was still a round of this wheaten bread under the large wooden bowl—and said: "Abu 'l-Fatḥ, take that round of bread and split it up it among your companions." Abu 'l-Fatḥ pretended not to notice. The host repeated to him what he had said, but he still pretended not to notice. When he repeated it a fourth time Abu 'l-Fatḥ said: "What's the matter with you, confound you, why don't *you* split it up between them, Allah split up your joints!" To which he retorted: "It will suffer under other hands than mine, Allah keep you right!" One moment we put him in an embarrassing position and the next we laughed, but our friend neither laughed nor showed embarrassment.

Al-Makkī[214] and I paid him a visit. I rode on a hirer's donkey and al-Makkī on a borrowed one, and (his) donkey turned more difficult because of the circumstances of the visit. Al-Makkī spoke to his lads, saying: "I don't want chaff from you
48 / let alone anything more. Give him only water." So they watered him with well water but the donkey wouldn't drink though dying of thirst. So al-Makkī turned to (our host) and said: "Allah keep you right, they are watering my donkey with well water and its owner's house is on the road by the Tigris and he is only accustomed to sweet water." "Boy, mix it for him." he said. So they mixed it but he would not drink, so he repeated the request—but he lent him the ear of a person who hears only what he wants to hear.

Once he said to me: "Some folks, my brother, dip a piece (of bread torn off the round) immersing it totally in *murrī*[215] sauce—I say these are folk who like saltiness[216] but do not care for sharp tastes—I keep seeing a certain one of them tear a piece of the edge of a *jardhaqah* (a large coarse thin round of bread) then plunge it into sharp vinegar and drown it. Often I have seen one of them hold it for a moment in vinegar after immersing it and I say those are folk who combine a liking for sharp with salty tastes. Then I have often seen them do the same with mustard, but mustard is not much in demand. Tell me—what sort of humours do

213. The Kīak are a Turkish people living at this time in western Siberia possibly as far west as the Ural mountains. Poplar wood (*khalanj*) from their country was made into wooden bowls.

214. Abū Isḥāq al-Makkī, see Appendix 27.

215. A sauce of pennyroyal, flour, salt, cinnamon, saffron etc. See Appendix 28.

216. *Mulūḥah*, saltiness, can also mean small salt fish, anchovies (*ṣaḥnāh*).

these persons have? What kind (of people) are they? What remedy do they require? What should the treatment for them be?"

When I grasped his point of view and his silliness, the hold miserliness had obtained over him, how it had overcome him, I said: "In my opinion there is no more salutary treatment for them than to stop using relishes altogether." "No, *wallāhi*," he said. "There is no alternative."

Another friend there was of ours with whom we used to have the unhappy experience of eating together. He had become suspicious that we knew him for meanness over food—this gave rise to a notion in his mind and he imagined we had discussed his case with one another. So he would go on adding to the abundance of food, displaying eagerness for it to be eaten to such a degree that he said: "The one who lifts his hand before (the rest of) the company, I'll fine a dinar!" Some of them think that the dinar fine is more to his liking and this in him is possible, after his heart, and the advantage to himself for which he was (really) hoping from it.

A baker to a friend of mine told me that he beat him for baking the bread till it
49 was done to a turn and that he said to him: / "Bake my bread to be set in front of me till done to a turn, but bake the bread of those who eat with me betwixt and between. As for the children and the guest, put it only near enough the fire to make the dough cake and hold together." He imposed a hard task on him and when he was unable to perform it he beat him the number of stripes the law prescribes for a free man guilty of fornication.[217]

I recounted this tale to 'Abdullāh al-'Arūḍī (the Prosodist)[218] and he said: "Don't you know about the affair of the kid? He beat the cook in charge of roasting eighty lashes because of its being done to a turn. It was this way—he said to him: 'Put the kid in the *tannūr* when I put down the table (*khiwān*) so that I can find fault—I with you—for your slowness in cooking it, and you will answer—you—"Just a little longer." Then you'll bring it to us and it will look as if I had hurried you on. And when it is set in front of them not quite done I'll put it down to their fault for having the kid brought in (too soon). If they don't eat it, take it back to the *tannūr*, then you'll bring it to us tomorrow, cold, and one kid will make do in place of two.' One day the cook in charge of roasting brought it in done to a turn and the folk set to work on it. So he dealt him out eighty lashes, the beating for a man who slanders a free woman!"

Aḥmad b. al-Muthannā told me of a mutual friend, stout in body, of much learning, enjoying an income from a wide range of properties, holding high offices, who, at his table, when an extra chicken, round of thin bread, et cetera, was called for, referred the servant along with the baker to the steward, to write him a chit for it to the steward of the kitchen.

Once I saw him take a chicken and tear it in halves, toss one half to the man on

217. A hundred stripes.

218. A friend of al-Jāḥiẓ and regarded as a miser.

his right and one to the man on his left. He then said: "Boy, bring me another, a tender one for this one was very tough." I reckoned the very least (reaction) of both men would be never to come back to his table but I found both of them crowing over me for such a trivial (favour) he had bestowed on them but not on me!

They often showed him special consideration, setting a plump heathcock[219] and succulent chicken in front of him. On one of those nights the candle went out and
50 'Alī al-Aswārī[220] made a foray on a piece of what was set in front of him, / profiting by the darkness, acting on (the maxim) "night conceals plight". But though he was not a very noticing person, except in matters of this sort, he noticed him and remarked: "This is why monarchs would not to eat with market folk."

Aḥmad b. Muthannā told me that they would set to on the *jardhaqah* bread cleared from his table. Those *jardhaqahs* smeared (with drops of ghee, et cetera) they rubbed well; those of which a side had gone had piece(s) similar to it cut with a knife from the four quarters of the round of bread, lest anyone seeing it should suspect that they had done that of intention. Of the halves and quarters there were, part was set aside to make *tharīd*,[221] part cut into the shape of fingers to be served with some bits of fried meat.

I have seen a stout man, with a pompous enunciation, grandiose in expressing himself from being brought up in the shadow of monarchs endowed with abundance of learning, a caustic tongue, realization of the obscurest of failings and most recondite of admirable qualities, combined with exceeding quickness to attack people's honour and intolerance of those of their failings with which he was acquainted. His *tharīd* was of two colours certainly, but one was pure white and the other colour reddish brown—I observed this once or twice. Earlier on I had meant to reprove him over a dish he reserved exclusively to himself and to suffer the onus (of proffering) this distasteful and disagreeable advice, in his (own) interest and out of consideration for him. I realized this could only proceed from true sincerity and strong fraternal sentiment between brothers. However, when I noticed the piebaldness,[222] the white shanks and blaze on the forehead seemed trivial to me and I thought it best to say nothing and that preaching (to him) was futile.

219. The black partridge in Arabistan (*Francolinus vulgaris*).

220. 'Alī b. Khālid al-Aswārī was a prominent speculative theologian of the Mu'tazilites.

221. *Tharīd* is (usually) stale bread shredded into a bowl and moistened with ghee, broth or milk, etc. In the next paragraph it seems that a very small quantity of ghee was put into the *tharīd* so that only part of the bread became soaked in it.

222. Al-Jāḥiẓ is playing on the word *ablaq*, piebald black and white, commonly applied to a horse. He develops the equine metaphor by alluding to the white stocking on the shanks and blaze on the forehead of a horse, commendable in the animal. In the Arabian idiom a man's honour is white but can be blackened, for instance by miserliness (*bukhl*). He mischievously reverses the significance of the colours, turning the white of the stout man's *tharīd* into a blemish upon his honour. Were he truly honourable, i.e., generous, through the ghee and broth added to it his *tharīd* would have been dark in colour.

Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Madā'inī[223] has maintained that Mālik b. al-Mundhir's[224] *tharīdah* was piebald, but it may be that this is false. For my part I saw with my own two eyes what I told you about this man. It is a thing I saw only in him and of which I have not heard tell of anyone else.

I am in no way concerned to name those persons who bring disgrace upon themselves by fragrantly shaming conduct (*bukhl*), nor decent folk either, quite their opposite. With regard to the former I do not put a name to him, out of respect for him and since his rights must be observed, and to the latter I do not put a name, since Allah shields him and because of what is due to a man in such circumstances. I name only a person who does not belong in either category. I do indeed occasionally quote the name of the former should he happen to be a person who frequently jokes about it (*bukhl*) and whom I see treating it in witty fashion, employing that very same wit as a means to defend himself from shame.

51

The Tale of Abū Ja'far

Never did I see anybody like Abū Ja'far of Tarsus.

He visited folk who entertained him, censed him[225] and put *ghāliyah*-scent on his whiskers and moustache. His upper lip made him (want to) scratch it (because it itched) so he put his finger (in his mouth) and rubbed it from inside the lip, being afraid his finger would take away some of the *ghāliyah* if he scratched it from on top.

This and its like are highly amusing only if you can see the incident with your own two eyes, because a book does not provide you with a full picture of everything, or convey to you its entity, limitations and actualities.

52

The Story of al-Ḥizāmī/Ḥarāmī[226]

Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥizāmī 'Abdullāh b. Kāsib, secretary to Muways[227] and secretary to Dāwūd b. Abī Dāwūd, was the most miserly man Allah every created and yet the most affable man Allah ever created. He had a philosophy about miserliness and was one of those who support it, give it preference, argue in favour of it and call (upon) people to adopt it.

223. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Abdullāh al-Madā'inī, born and brought up in Basrah but moved to al-Madā'in and then Baghdad. An historian and writer, his many writings are lost; some were apparently in much the same vein as those of al-Jāḥiẓ but only survive in quotation.

224. Mālik b. al-Mundhir b. al-Jārūd al-'Abdī of the 'Abd al-Qays, a Basran of the Umayyad period, commander of his tribe who fought the Shī'ite agitator al-Mukhtār.

225. A visitor about to leave is censed. *Ghāliyah* is a compounded perfume, distilled, of which ten recipes were known in Iraq of the 9th century A.D.

226. See Appendix 1.

227. See Appendix 17.

Once he saw me in Tishrīn I,[228] the cold having come on a little early, and I had put on a light Qūmisī[229] cloak of mine, somewhat worn, and he said to me: "How distasteful extravagance is in a man of intelligence and how unseemly is ignorance in a man of wisdom. I would not have expected self-neglect and bad policy to bring you to the state in which I see you." "And what do you disapprove of in me today?" I asked. "This wasn't what you said of me yesterday." He replied: "Your wearing this cloak before the time for it." "Cold enough to justify it has occurred," I replied. "Had the cold which has occurred happened to fall in Tammūz and Āb it would still have been a season for wearing this cloak." "If that be the case," he said, "instead of this lined (cloak) put on a cotton-quilted *jubbah*-tunic and it will do instead—and you will have repaired your error, but wearing wool today can't be allowed!" "And why so?" I asked. "Because the dust of the close of summer permeates it and settles in its interstices," he replied, "and when people have rain and the atmosphere becomes humid and everything turns damp, that dust gets damp. Dust is only soil, indeed the essential part of soil. It is salty and when this happens the cloak shrinks and wrinkles because it is wool, so the fabric of it gets matted together and (the salt) eats into it like woodworm, working on it like grubs. It is quicker to destroy it than white ant in the palm trunks of Najrān.[230] But put off wearing it until folk have rain, the dust settles, the soil cakes together, the rain causes the dust in the atmosphere to settle, washes and cleanses it—then put it on, with the blessing of Allah."

He would arrive at his family in Kufah once each year and for them he would purchase the quantity he estimated would do for their cooking and food for a year.
53 When he had inspected this and that man's grain and ascertained / the price of it, he measured out a standard measure from each of them and weighed it on the scale, then bought the heaviest of them. He preferred nothing to local or Mosul (grain) unless the price was approximately the same, but under all circumstances he would avoid Maysānī[231] (grain) unless necessity forced him to buy it, saying: "Soft, poor, and the fire in the stomach is a devil! We ought to eat only what's stone-(hard) and what's like stone." I once said to him: "Don't you know that upon bread of local (grain) there grows something like soil, earth and dust[232] piled on top of one another?" "What excellent bread that is," he said. "Would it were like earth to a greater extent than this!"

It was his way, when he put on a clean newly laundered gown, and they brought him every sort of incense on earth, not to cense himself, fearing the smoke of the aloe wood would soil the white of his gown. If it had got dirty and incense was

228. October. Tammūz and Āb, *infra*, are July and August.

229. Qūmis province in Persia, south of the Caspian Sea, was known for the manufacture of fine woollen cloth.

230. Najrān, N.E. of the Yemen border, has abundant date plantations.

231. Maysān, a town between Wāsiṭ and Basrah.

232. This is explained as mould growing on bread in damp conditions, but the meaning is a little obscure.

brought to him he would not agree to cense himself and try out the scent of the burning aloe wood before calling for oil to rub over his chest, stomach and the inside of his waist-wrapper—he would then cense himself—so that the scent would be more clinging.

He used to say: "How splendid winter is! It retains the scent of incense on you, date wine left open in it does not turn acid and broth, even if left standing for days, doesn't go bad." He used to cense himself only[233] in his friends' houses. When it was summer time he would call for his (outer) clothes and wear them over his gown lest any of the incense scent be lost.

On one occasion he said: "White hair has a repugnant sweaty smell. Whiteness of hair means it is dead, blackness means it is alive. Don't you notice that the place (on the back of) a black donkey where a sore was, grows in white only? Folk in this 'Askar[234] (district) of ours aren't happy with anything less from me than embracing and kissing. Perfume is expensive, using it a bad habit and anyone who has it is obliged to guard and keep it from his family. The seller of perfumes indeed seals (his perfume bottles) from the most favoured of his lads. I consider nothing more appropriate than using a sandalwood comb as it has a pleasant fragrance which the hair is quick to take on. The very least it does is to exclude the repugnant sweaty smell of white hair. So I have come to a state where I have to be owed nothing and to owe nothing. Until he departed the world al-Ḥizāmī's perfume was a sandalwood comb—but a friend used to put perfume on it!"

54 'Alī al-Aswārī asked him for the loan of a hundred dirhams and al-Ḥizāmī came to me sad and upset. So I said to him: "One who sees no way out of loaning to a friend is sad purely from apprehension that his money won't come back to him, not reckoning it to be just a gift from him. Or a man is apprehensive of complaint (of his meanness). So, if he doesn't lend out of generosity, he lends from fear. This is a domain in which notoriety (for *bukhl*) is something to set your heart at ease. I am confident of your resolve and decision to keep to it (*bukhl*) and of your lack of concern that folk should call you mean. So wherefore your dejection and worry?"

"O Allah. Forgiveness!" he said. "That's not what the matter is with me. I am worried only because I used to suppose people's covetousness no longer concentrated on me and had come to be despairing of me, that I had firmly closed this door, cast despair into their hearts and cut off all reasons to conceive notions (of getting anything out of me). Now I see myself finding among them . . .[235] One reason for a man going bankrupt is people's enviousness of what he has, because when they are envious of him they resort to tricks to catch him and set traps for him, but when they abandon hopes of him he is safe. This procedure of 'Alī's is a

233. See note 225. The scent would be provided by his hosts.

234. See note 153.

235. A lacuna in the text is suggested. Perhaps *fa-arā-nī wāḥid-an minhum*, now he has shown me one of them, should be read.

flagrant effort to show me up as weak, so I am not in the least doubt that I am gullible in his opinion and like some of those who gnaw away at his money; and yet he is sociable and friendly. When the likes of him don't really know me, and my convictions aren't well fixed in his mind, what do you expect of the neighbours—what indeed moreover do you expect of (mere) acquaintances? I see myself blowing on charcoal that isn't there and attempting to get a stick[236] that makes only a sound (when rubbed against another) to produce fire. I dread I should be the object of loose talk. I dread Allah in His Heaven may already have determined to make me a pauper.

"And they say," he went on, " 'Your robe suits your friend better than when it's on you', but if he is shorter than I am what do they say? Doesn't he get caught up in my gown? And if he happens to be very tall—I am very short—and he puts it on, (they say): 'Won't he be a marvel to the beggars?' Who makes a worse impression on his friend than a person who turns him into a laughing-stock in front of people? Under what obligations am I to dress him up just so that I can learn he is exactly like me when he is wearing it? When is this to take place and how shall that be—in life or death?

"I have a taste for meat cooked till it drops off the bone", he would say, "but I
55 have a taste also for meat that retains a certain toughness." / Once I said to him: "You're just like a fellow who says: 'I have a taste for the meat of a couple of fowls.' "And what would you do with a fellow who says that?" he asked. "That's me! I do have a taste for the meat of a couple of fowls—one a cross-bred[237] fattened up, the other *khawāmazkah*[238], raw, tender!"

On another occasion I said to him: "Are you happy it is said of you: "Abdullāh is a miser'?" "Let Allah not deprive me of this title," he replied. "How so?" said I. "Because", he answered, "one doesn't say So-and-so is a miser unless he is possessed of money. Hand me the money and call me by any name you like." I retorted: "Neither does one say: 'So-and-so is open-handed' unless he is possessed of money. This adjective comprises praise and money, but the noun *bukhl*, miserliness, comprises money and censure—you have picked the more despicable, the meaner of the two." "There is a distinction between the two," he said. "Out with it then!" I said. "In their saying 'miser'," he answered, "lies affirmation that money is settled in one's possession, whereas in their saying 'open-handed' lies notification that money is passing from one's possession. The noun *bakhīl* is a word comprising conservation and censure, whereas the noun *sakhiyy*, open-handed, comprises squandering and praise. Money is bright, beneficial, bringing honour and esteem to those who own it, whereas praise is a puff of wind and a mockery, your very listening to it is weakness and meanness of spirit. How little use praise

236. See p. 27.

237. The *khilāsī* is bred from the crossing of an Indian with a Persian fowl.

238. This puzzling word, I can only suggest, may be derived from Persian *khawā*, flesh, meat and *mazagī*, sweetness, flavour.

is, *wallāhi*, when one's stomach is empty, his body naked, his children dying and those who envied him filled with malicious joy."

We were at Dāwūd b. Abī Dāwūd's place at Wāsiṭ at the time he was governor of Kaskar, when presents arrived from Basrah, including skins of date-syrup—these he divided among us, each of us taking what he was given, except al-Ḥizāmī. This I found strange with regard to the views he held and I did not understand how he figured things out, so I said to al-Makkī: "I knew already that al-Ḥizāmī is concerned about giving only—to which he is inimical, but receiving—it's his lost lamb and (heart's) desire! Were he to be given the vipers of Sijistān,[239] the serpents of Egypt and the snakes of al-Ahwāz he would accept them if the noun acceptance, applied to them. Perhaps he wanted to be given preference in the sharing out?" Said al-Makkī: "I am his secretary and my friendship (with him) is
56 of longer standing (than yours). That's not what's up with him. / Here is something we cannot fathom!" He wasn't long in coming in to see us and I asked him about it. He held back a little, then disclosed his secret with the words: "The loss incurred in (selling) them would come to many times the profit and, in my opinion, to accept them would have led to a backward step." "The first charge on them (to be incurred)", I said, "would have been the onus of (expressing) thanks! "That never entered my mind," he said. "Out with it then," I said. "In that case what *was* in your mind?"

He said: "First of all is the hire of the porters. Then they are exposed to risk until they arrive at the house. When they do arrive at the house they become a pretext for demanding an *'aṣīdah*[240] savoury dough, a rice dish and a *bistandūd*.[241] If I sell them to escape this you'll make me into (an object) of notoriety and leave me an oddity in his mind. If I keep them they will go on *'aṣīdahs* and things like *'aṣīdahs*, and that will drag (me) into buying ghee, then the ghee will drag in something else, and this date-syrup will do me more damage than the children.

"If I make it into date-wine (*nabīdh*) I'll need to hire pots, a large jar and water, and to hire someone to stoke (the fire) under it and spend all his time at it. If I put the serving girl in charge of it her dress will get blackened, I shall have to pay for lye and soap and the more she works the more she'll eat. If it turns out badly the outlay will go for nothing without my receiving compensation for it in any kind of way at all because vinegar made with *dādhī*[242] dyes meat black, alters the taste, turns broth black and is no good as a relish-dip—this is when it turns into vinegar,

239. Sijistān was the early Arab name for the Persian province of Sīstān, the western part of modern Afghanistan. Al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Ḥayawān*, iv, 169, says it was noted for its vipers.

240. See Appendix 29. The *aruzzah* was a dish of rice and sugar.

241. This term, for which there are variant readings, has baffled the editors. I think it is corrupt and propose to read *sanbūsaj* from Perisan *sanbūsah*, anything triangular. This emendation is orthographically easy to make, and the *sanbūsaj* recipe is found in *A Baghdad Cookery Book* of the late 'Abbasid period. It is the tricorn pastry with a spicy chopped meat filling, that we call "curry puffs". Arberry quotes the 4th/10th-century poet al-Kushājim: "Follows *sanbūsaj*, well-fried".

242. See Appendix 30.

but mostly it turns from being *nabīdh*—but does not become vinegar. If it does turn out right—and I take refuge with Allah, Allah forbid!—and is of good quality, I find no alternative but to drink it and would be sad to leave it. If I sit in the house drinking any of it I can only do this by leaving off honeyed must of Fārsian[243] wine, fattened fowls of Kaskar, fruit from al-Jabal/Jibāl, tender fresh dessert and fresh sweet basil at the house of a certain person whose money never gets less and whose substance never stops growing, at the house of a person who does not care on which of his two sides he falls,[244] along with the loss of entertaining conversation and fine singing.

"However if I *do* sit at home drinking it I must have one person (to drink with me)—that one person must be provided with a small dirham's worth of meat, a *ṭassūj*[245] of dessert, a *qīrāṭ* of sweet basil, some seasoning for the pot and wood for the fire—this, all of it, loss. Moreover, this is ill luck, privation and to depart
57 from / a pleasant custom.[246] If that drinking companion be uncongenial, those held in prison are in a happier state than I. If he be—and I take refuge in Allah, Allah forbid—congenial—Allah opens a door to ruin my property, because thereupon he will conduct himself with regard to my property as I do with the property of anyone above me. If a friend learns that I have a visitor in my house, and *nabīdh*, he will knock on (my) door, taking the liberties of an old friend. If I don't receive him—distress![247] If I let him in—wastefulness!

"If I happen to find the conversation of folk congenial, as those in whose company I am, find mine, I shall become associated with the extravagant, parted from my brothers the thrifty (*muṣliḥūn*) and turned into one of 'the brothers of the Satans'.[248] If I become like that, my earning from the money of others will disappear and others will earn from mine. If I were to suffer either of these two (adverse conditions)—in which I do not acquiesce—how (much worse would it be) if I am made to suffer giving but not receiving! I take refuge in Allah, Allah forbid, from failure to refrain from evil after being preserved from acts of disobedience to Allah and from loss after growth.[249] Had this been in (my youth it) would have been easier.

"This *dūshāb*,[250] date-syrup, is a sly spying trick of ill-fortune, a snare of Satan,

243. Shīrāz, famous for its wine, is the capital of Fars province.

244. Ibn Mas'ūd said: "Let not what you see of a man please you until you see on which of his sides he falls at the conclusion of his work—on Islam or something else."

245. The *ṭassūj* is a quarter of a *dānaq* which is a sixth of a dirham, say, a halfpenny's worth of dessert. For the *qīrāṭ* see note 117.

246. Of dining with Dāwūd b. Abī Dāwūd, governor of Wāsiṭ.

247. Because of the reproaches he would suffer.

248. "The squanderers are the brothers of the Satans" (Qur'ān, xvii, 2).

249. The phrase runs: "We take refuge in Allah from *al-ḥawr ba'd al-kawr*", i.e. from the untwisting of the turban after twisting it round the head, from a bad state of affairs after a good state of affairs.

250. *Dūshāb* lit. sweet water, Persian.

a deception of the envious, sweetness bringing bitterness in its train. I greatly fear that Abū Sulaymān[251] has become bored with me as a drinking companion and it is he who has contrived these machinations against me."

We were in a highly respectable place amid a numerous company, folk restrained (in speaking), the reception room large and he (al-Ḥizāmī) some way apart from me. Al-Makkī turned to me and spoke, the people all listening, and said: "O Abū 'Uthmān, who among our friends is the most miserly?" "Abū Hudhayl,"[252] I replied. "Then—who?" he asked. "A friend of ours whom I won't name," said I. From afar al-Ḥizāmī said: "He just means me!" He then went on: "You envy those economical in their expenditure because of their (good) management, the growth of their money and continuing prosperity, so you try to humiliate them through this sobriquet (*bakhīl*) and to scheme against them by this insulting epithet. To the person who squanders his money you do injustice in giving the name of 'liberality' (to it), to distract him from his concern(s), and by giving the name of miserliness to a thrifty person (*muṣliḥ*) who looks after his money you do him injustice, because of your envy of his prosperity. The person who ruins (himself) will not escape nor will the thrifty person be secure."

58 Abū 'Ubaydah[253] said: "Khālid b. 'Abdullāh al-Qasrī[254] heard that people were accusing him of meanness with food, so one day he delivered a speech, following up one statement by another until he came to introduce apology in defence of it into the thread of his discoursing. One of the arguments he advanced, relating to the strain on him at the sight of a person eating with him and his distaste for him, emerged in his words: 'One day, in the age of Paganism, Khālid the Haggard watched people eating and camels chewing the cud and to his companions he said: "Do you regard me with the same eye as I regard these people and camels?" "Yes," they answered. Thereupon he swore by his god that he would not eat vegetable herbs even if he died through wasting away. He used to derive his nourishment from milk and have some liquid to drink. This made him emaciated and withered, and when his body grew thin and very wasted he was called the Haggard (al-Mahzūl).

"Then Khālid said: 'Here am I, tortured by the (need to) chew, forced to keep my jawbones working, compelled to act like beasts, enduring the silliness and helplessness of it all. Why should I put up with it in the company of those whom I do not have to have and from whom I can get away? Let each man eat in his own

251. i.e. Dāwūd b. Abī Dāwūd.

252. Abu 'l-Hudhayl al-'Allāf was one of the chief Mu'tazilites in Basrah, the teacher of al-Naẓẓām (Appendix 21).

253. Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā Abū 'Ubaydah, born in Basrah in 110/728 of Jewish parents settled in Persia, was a well-known authority on grammar and philology, with Khārijī and Shu'ūbī leanings. He died in 210/825 poisoned by a banana.

254. A lord of the Umayyad era, made governor of Iraq by the Caliph Hishām in 106/724. See Appendix 31.

home, in a place where he is safe and with which he is familiar, behind his own wall and door."

This is what I have heard about Khālid b. 'Abdullāh al-Qasrī and his vindication (of himself).

Regarding Khālid the Haggard he was one of the "Two Khālids", the lords of Banū Asad.[255] Al-Aswad b. Ya'fur[256] says of him and Khālid b. Naḍlah:

Before you there died the Two Khālids, both,
'Amīdī Banī Jaḥwān and Ibn al-Muḍallal.

59

The Tale of al-Ḥārithī

Yesterday they said to al-Ḥārithī:

"You prepare a meal and certainly do it well—your expenditure upon it is considerable and you provide plenty. You spend lavishly on the baker, cook, roaster and confectioner.[257] Then, withal, you don't have an enemy at it to fill him with chagrin, nor a friend to provide him with enjoyment, an ignorant fellow to become acquainted (with your munificence), a visitor to do him honour, a grateful soul to keep him constant—you will realize when he has turned aside from before you and is no longer under your eye and is become plunder, shared out, distributed and devoured. If you were to invite to it someone whose gratitude would benefit you, who will go on talking of it as the days pass by, one whose pleasant conversation and attentiveness entertains you, one who makes the meal last on and the time spent over it seem to fly, that would truly be more worthy of you and more in keeping with the meal you have presented.

"Why, furthermore, do you admit to your exclusive table persons who show you no thanks and those who, if they thank you (at all), do not do so properly, persons who do not distinguish between the appetizing and delicious and what is coarse and badly cooked?" He said: "What Abu 'l-Fātik said prevents me from doing this." "And who may this Abu 'l-Fātik be?" they asked. "He is the qadi of the Fraternity[258] of Young Men (*al-Fityān*)" was his answer. "Never have I eaten

255. The Banū Asad tribe inhabited territory west of the Euphrates under the control of the Lakhmid monarchs of al-Ḥīrah before Islam.

256. Al-Aswad b. Ya'fur was a Tamīmī Dārī, a poet of the pre-Islamic era, one of the Manādhirah (Lakhmid) poets and reckoned a *faḥl*, stallion, i.e. an outstanding poet. Khālid b. Naḍlah al-Faq'asi was a lord of Banū Asad in the time of the Lakhmid al-Mundhir b. Mā' al-Samā', one of the latter's two boon companions, who made him angry when drinking with him so he ordered them to be executed. There is some confusion over the Khālids. Khālid b. Naḍlah was also a poet.

257. Lit., the maker of *khabīṣah*. *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 48, besides recipes for the ordinary *khabīṣ*, has others for almond, gourd and carrot *khabīṣ*. See Appendix 32.

258. The *fityān*, sing. *fatā*, were associations of young men, living in small detached communities in comradeship, coming from varied social backgrounds. The term *futuwwah* was coined in the 2nd/8th century to describe them. See Cahen, for a description of the movements that developed in the 'Abbasid era under this name. The *fityān* of Abu 'l-Fātik appear a somewhat exclusive association.

with anyone but I saw him criticize something—some he denounced and condemned as vile. And in gangsters (*shuṭṭār*)[259] (of course) there is something vile. What do you imagine he would be like in the company of persons of manly virtue and persons belonging to noble houses?" "And what *did* Abu 'l-Fātik say?" they asked.

"Abu 'l-Fātik said," he replied, " 'A Young Man (*fatā*) may not be a snatcher (*nashshāl*),[260] a sponger (*nashshāf*), swallower (*mirsāl*), crammer (*lakkām*), sucker (*maṣṣāṣ*), scatterer (*naffāḍ*), masseur (*dallāk*), hollower-out of centres (*muqawwir*), siever (*mugharbil*), speaker with his mouth full (*muḥalqim*), choker (*musawwigh*), sopper-up (*mulaghghim*), or greener (*mukhaḍḍir*).' Now (imagine) how it would be if al-Fātik were to see a finger-licker (*laṭṭā'*), dipper of part-eaten morsels (*qaṭṭā'*), gnawer (*nahhāsh*), stretcher (*maddād*), thruster (*daffā'*), or shifter (*muḥawwil*)?

"*Wallāhi*, I prefer the farmers[261] in their considering sipping unmannerly. They are nauseated at stripping (meat) off bones, suspect the honesty of persons sucking marrow from bones—when they (the farmers) eat with a skewer,[262] cut with a knife, maintain silence at meal times, not engaging in conversation, preferring into communicate by signs.[263]

60 "I can put up, *wallāhi*, with a guest and an uninvited person accompanying him, but I cannot bear a glutton who stuffs meat into his mouth nor a *jardabīl*[264] who claps his hands over the meat to prevent it being removed. A person who comes uninvited to a drinks party I find easier to bear than one who arrives uninvited and devours all before him!

"Who doubts that to be on one's own is preferable to sitting with an uncongenial companion yet to sit with an uncongenial companion is preferable to a glutton, since every glutton sits with one, but not every person who sits with one is a glutton. If one is obliged to eat in company and has to share (with another) let it be with a person who does not take the brain all to himself, disregarding me, or snatch the egg off the *baqīlah* (?),[265] bolt down the chicken-liver, try to outstrip (others) to get

259. C.E. Bosworth, *The Medieval Islamic Underworld*, I, 37, bands of urban rowdies and mobsters.

260. This term and those that follow are explained on p. 63–5.

261. The *dihqān* (pl. *dahāqīn*), a Persian word, is a cultivator, sometimes a chief of cultivators.

262. Persian *barchī*, a small spear, arabicized to *bārjīn*.

263. Al-Jaḥiẓ in *al-Tāj*, says that the Sasanid monarchs, when they came to their tables, stopped all conversation and communicated only by pointing and signs and concentrated their minds on food.

264. Another Persian word, *girdabān*. It is also said to mean a man who takes a piece of bread in his left hand and eats with his right, then when the bread in people's hands is finished he eats what is in his left hand!

265. What a *baqīlah*/*buqaylah* is remains uncertain, but the word suggests a dish of beans, with perhaps an egg on top? Al-Tha'ālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb*, no. 808, quoting *al-Bukhalā'*, says to hurry to take the *bayḍat al-baqīlah* was disapproved of, so everyone tried to push it over to the person next him. As a result the dish became rarely offered.

at the brain of the *sulla'ah*'s[266] head, grab the kid's kidneys, quickly swallow down the stork's stomach, tear at the haunch of the lamb, fillet the stomach of the *shīsān*,[267] fix on the eyes in the (sheep) heads, possess himself of the chicken breasts, push ahead (of his fellows) to get at young chicken's wing-tips, but takes only what is before him without looking at what is in front of others or expressing an appetite for choice meats, not putting his brothers to the trouble of providing expensive fare and without putting folk to shame through displaying an appetite for what may not be there.

"How can the world be at rights and living congenial with one who picks out (for himself) the livers and humps[268] when he sees camels slaughtered, appropriates the bones and tripes when they bring him a roasted side of sheep. He has no pity for an old man because of his weakness, no sympathy for a young man's keen appetite, no consideration for children, caring not how circumstances turn out with them. If obliged (to eat in company) it will be with one who does not make his portion of what is mine[269] larger than my own portion (of it).

"Even worse than all I have described, still more injurious than all I have recounted, is that sometimes the cook will bring in an exotic dish, sometimes presenting a thing quite out of the ordinary. The custom with such a dish as this is that it should be of fine ingredients, of little bulk, unlike a *ṭafshīlah*[270]-ragout, *harīsah*-paste of meat and flour, a *fujliyyah*-horse-radish concoction or a *kurunbiyyah*-cabbage dish. Sometimes it is hurried (to be served) and (the cook) serves it piping hot, obliging (the guests) to hold back, at other times it is substance that is slow to cool down. In the ease with which my friends swallow hot (food) they have the constitution of ostriches, but in the agony I experience over hot food I have the constitution of lions.[271] If I hold back until it becomes feasible (to eat it) they polish it all off. If I am hasty, afraid it will disappear and hoping to share some of it with them, I am not sure it will not do me harm. Hot food sometimes kills, sometimes renders one sterile, sometimes brings about blood in the urine."

61 Then he said: "This ʿAlī al-Aswārī ate with ʿĪsā b. Sulaymān b ʿAlī[272] and a splendid fish, exceedingly plump, was set in front of them. He flicked its belly lightly and there it was, packed tight with fat! He had choked over a mouthful and

266. Said to be a species of grey coloured bird with long legs.

267. This is seemingly a fish, but is unknown to J.G. Lorimer, "Fisheries of the Persian Gulf", *Gazetteer*, I, II, 2314, but the orthography suggests his *samān*, an edible yellow fish.

268. The hump and liver appear to have been the choice parts. See C. Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, II, 231, on the fat of the hump.

269. Or "of my property".

270. A Persian dish, according to some, made of the pulses, peas or beans or lentils with vinegar. Al-Baghdādī describes *ṭafayshal* quite differently. See Appendix 33. There are various spellings. See p. 112. For *harīsah*, see Appendix 34.

271. According to al-Jāḥiẓ, al-*Ḥayawan*, I, 147, the ostrich eats hot coals and stones, but ibid., IV, 349, the lion is afraid of fire.

272. Son of Sulaymān b. ʿAlī, paternal uncle of the Caliph al-Saffāḥ, who made him governor over Basrah and its provinces.

was demanding a drink. He finished drinking and meantime every man of them had scooped out a bit of the fish's belly with his piece of bread. Now 'Īsā used to choose eaters, selecting each devoted to and enamoured (of eating). When 'Alī al-Aswārī became apprehensive of losing (some) and anxious not to miss out, being next of them to 'Īsā, he snatched the morsel from his hand more swiftly than a falcon seizes and an eagle swoops, without ever having eaten at his place before this occasion of his. 'Confound you,' they said to him. 'You've snatched the Amir's bit from his hand when he has already lifted it up to his (lips) and opened his mouth to receive it, without any friendly familiarity and pleasantries beforehand.'

" 'It wasn't like that', he said, 'and anyone who says so is a liar. We but stretched out our hands together and my hand chanced to land on the front of the piece of meat (lit. fat) and his to land on the back of it. The meat is surrounded by intestine and as we raised our hands together I was faster in moving and, the intestines being intertwined, not separate from each other, so by this drawing away (of mine) everything on his piece became transferred to my piece, because genus is linked to genus and (indivisible) substance with substance.'[273] I—how can I eat with folk who do such as they do, and, in support of it, argue with such arguments as these?"

Then he said: "You recommend me to consort with vile persons, depraved people, anyone disposed to disparage and reprimand (others), yet springing up in their haste to attack people's reputations. These persons are happy only that people should invite them without their inviting them back, that they should eat but not serve with food, gossip about others without heeding gossip about themselves—they are vile people."

Then he said: "Mu'āwiyah, when occupying the rank of caliph, on top of Quraysh, full of vigour, of sound judgement, of flowing eloquence, of perfect bodily health, boldness of spirit at the fray, the breaking of spears and shattering of swords, invited to his table a man of a house unknown[274] and obscure lineage, not accredited with even a day of meritorious (action). On the man's piece (of bread) he noticed a hair, so he said: 'Remove the hair from your piece of bread,'
62 there being no reason for his saying this but simply advice or kindliness. But the man said: 'Are you actually watching me in such a way as to notice a hair? May I never sit with you at table as long as I live and may I never tell this of you as long as I endure.'[275] Folk didn't know which side of Mu'āwiyah's attitude was the more admirable and becoming, his ignoring the man's (rudeness) or his solicitude for him. This was the thanks he received from him and his gratitude to him."

Then he said: "How do I entertain a person who, if I notice him hold back from

273. Mu'tazili dialectic.

274. Not known whence he came. In *al-'Iqd al-farīd* this story is told of the Caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik.

275. Ibn Qutaybah attributes to this man the verse:

Rather death surely, than visiting a miser
Intent on watching the food of a fellow eater.

eating and say to him: 'Eat and don't hold back from eating,' says: 'Why did he pay attention to holding back and the opposite?' and if he holds back and I don't encourage him to go on and take notice of him, says: 'If it weren't according to his wish (he would have spoken)'?"[276]

Then he said: "A man of Banū Tamīm when at al-Muhallab's[277] table, held out his hand to the servant with the drink, to ask him to pour him a drink, but the servant of the drinks neither saw him nor paid any attention to him. He did this several times with al-Muhallab watching him—he had stopped eating so he could wash down what he had in his mouth with a drink. When al-Muhallab had put up with this for some time he called out: 'Boy, give him the drink he wants.' When he gave him the drink he found it insufficient and asked for more. Al-Muhallab had instructed them to provide little water but a lot of bread. The Tamīmī said: 'You are certainly quick to provide drink and to provide extra!' And held his hand back from the food. So al-Muhallab said: 'Man, forget it! This won't do you any good nor will it do me any harm. I mean one thing and you mean the opposite.'

"I realize I am a lesser person than Muʿāwiyah and al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah and that those (whose company I wish to avoid) are all the readier (to criticize me) and feed[278] on my flesh."

Then he said: "There should be a warning to you in al-Jārūd b. Abī Ṣabrah[279] and an admonisher in Abu 'l-Ḥārith b. Jummayn.[280] They were invited to meals and receptions of honour because of their wit, agreeableness, pleasant conversation and because they made time fly. Both had a taste for exotic dishes and would suggest rare delicacies (to their hosts), burdening folk with heavy expenses and inflicting great inconveniences on their households. In return for their kindness the thanks they received you already know.

"Added to this, Bilāl b. Abī Burdah[281] was a man ever ready to pick faults, quick to attack the honour of men of nobility. Of al-Jārūd he enquired: 'What is it like to have a meal with 'Abdullāh b. Abī 'Uthmān?' 'Good and bad,'[282] he replied. 'How does he behave at tables?' he asked. 'He keeps watching mouthfuls and rebuffs anyone asking (for something else),' he answered. 'And what is it like to

276. By remaining silent he implied that he did not want his guest to continue eating.

277. See note 162. Al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah, for a time governor of Basrah, was later appointed governor of Khurāsān by the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwān. He died in 83/702. See Pellat, *Le Milieu basrien*, 32.

278. Lit. to pasture, to eat and drink to satiety.

279. Of a prominent Basrah family, known as Ibn Nawfal, of the Shīʿah, a scholar and outstanding poet. He was inimical to Bilāl b. Abī Burdah, the notorious qadi at Basrah.

280. See note 19.

281. Bilāl was a descendant of Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī. His mother was a slave girl and his grandmother Jewish. He became Amir of Basrah. As a qadi he was unjust and took bribes.

282. Cf. Qur'ān, iii, 104, a community ordering al-*maʿrūf* and forbidding *al-munkar* (good and bad); ibid., iv, 6, *falya'kul bi-'l-maʿrūf*.

eat with Salm b. Qutaybah?'[283] he asked. 'A meal for three and if there are four they go hungry,' he replied. 'What is it like to eat with Tasnīm b. al-Ḥawāri?'[284] he enquired. 'Small change[285] handed out by the bride-groom,' was his answer. 'What is a meal with al-Minjāb b. Abī 'Uyaynah like?' he asked. 'There's no good in three fingers in a large bowl,'[286] was his answer. And so it went on until he had covered most of the Basrah people and anyone who would honour him with an
63 invitation, welcome, intimacy / and put his money at his command. Only a person who kept him at a distance escaped (his tongue), as conversely only a person who made a companion out of him became exposed to his (backbiting).

"And here is Abū Shu'ayb al-Qallāl (the Maker of Water Jars)[287], with (all) Muways's making a close companion of him, welcoming him, doing him kindness, making him free of his food, overlooking the glutton (in him), his small care of (his money) and little concern for amassing it—Abū Shu'ayb was asked about him and he maintained that he had never seen a meaner person than him over food. 'How is that?' they asked and he said: 'What shows you this is that he prepares it nicely, arranging it in the way of a person who doesn't want it touched, far less anything beyond that. How can the tooth presume to bring that loveliness to ruin, demolish that arrangement, break up that composition—when he realizes its loveliness will shame it and instill reverence for it? Were he (truly) generous he would not defend it with such weapons and interpose these shields before it. He has turned his benevolence into malevolence, his lavishness into withholding, his invitation to partake of it into a ban.' "

He continued: "Then Abu 'l-Ḥārith Jummayn was asked: 'How did Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā[288] look at his midday meal?' 'Where his eyes are concerned,' he replied, 'they were the eyes of a madman.' He also said of him: 'Had he got in the palm of his hand a *kurr*[289] of mustard (seed) and were then to play with it as al-Ubullī plays with a ball, certainly not a single grain would slip down between his fingers.' He was also asked: 'How generous was he, in particular with bread?' '*Wallāhi*,' he replied. 'Were he to receive a quantity of grain sufficient, when dry, to exhaust the water of the clouds were they to rain in a deluge, he would not give up a single round!' "

283. Salm b. Qutaybah b. Muslim al-Bāhilī. His father was an Amir of the Caliph Marwān and he himself governor of Basrah under the Umayyads and, for a short time, of the 'Abbasids.

284. A nobleman of Basrah and friend of the poet Bashshār b. Burd.

285. Money thrown or given to the musicians at a festival, or the bride at a wedding, etc.

286. The sense is indeterminate.

287. Abū Shu'ayb or simply Shu'ayb was of Sughdī origins, Sughd being the district of Samarqand east of the Oxus and Khurāsān. Though a potter he was a scholar and a poet.

288. A son of Yaḥyā b. Khālid the Barmecide, of less distinction than his brothers. After the fall of the Barmecides he was imprisoned only, but released by the Caliph al-Amīn.

289. The 10th-century *Mafātīḥ al-'ulūm* of al-Khwārizmī defines the Iraqi *kurr* as 1,500 Baghdad *raṭls* and this was also used in Kufah, but the Basrah and Wasiṭ *kurr* was 8,200 *raṭls* (See Hinz, *Islamische Masse*, 42–3.)

Abū Nuwās used to pasture at Ismāʿīl b. Naybakht's[290] table as camels pasture on the *ḥamḍ*[291] plant after hankering after it for a long time. Then the thanks he received from him was the verse:

Ismāʿīl's rounds of bread from which pieces are torn,
Like bright silks, rents are mended, ends together drawn.

He also said:

His bread is but Kulayb b. Wāʾil[292]
On nights when his might banned land where green herbage grows.

64 Abu 'l-Shamaqmaq[293] would disparage Jaʿfar b. Abī Zuhayr's food when he had guests, at a hospitable reception given by Jaʿfar, saying nonetheless:

I see that, to you, bread so precious is
You reckon it amid the clouds of the skies.
'Tis not to defend us that you fan us,
But the loss to it which you fear from flies.

To al-Jammāz[294] he said: "I saw you in So-and-so's entrance hall with a large bowl in front of you, and you were eating. Of what was the bowl made and what was in it?" "Dog's vomit in a swine's skull!" he replied.

To a man of the Arabs they said: "You have stayed with all of the tribes and how did you find Khuzāʿah?"[295] "Hunger and (fine) words," he said.

ʿAmr b. Maʿdī Karib[296] dismounted at the place of a man of Banu 'l-Mughīrah, they being those of Quraysh who most frequently (entertained) to a meal, and he brought him what he had to hand, there happening to be a left-over in what he brought him. So to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, whose uncles they were on his mother's side, he exclaimed: "The mean fellows of Banu 'l-Mughīrah, Commander of the

290. The Naybakht family were nobles of Basrah. Ismāʿıl was the son of Sahl b. Naybakht, a physician and the astronomer to the Caliph al-Manṣūr. His sons, including Ismāʿīl, grew up in Basrah, and he became a companion of the Caliph al-Maʾmūn. The family was Shīʿī. Abū Nuwās used to satirize them, perhaps in fun.

291. A low-growing salty plant.

292. The Lord of Rabīʿah who used to make an inviolate pasture (*ḥimā*) of land where herbage grew. Abū Nuwās means that bread is as difficult to come by at Ibn Naybakht's table, as it was to be allowed to pasture in Kulayb's *ḥimā*. See Appendix 35.

293. Abu 'l-Shamaqmaq was a client of the last Umayyad Caliph, Marwān, one of the poets of his time who excelled on poverty and the lower class groups. See Appendix 36. His verses quoted here are repeated on p. 114.

294. Muḥammad b. ʿAmr al-Jammāz, of a client family of the Taym tribe, a friend of Abū Nuwās who came to Baghdad in the time of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd. He was a buffoon with an evil tongue, given to lampooning and mockery.

295. The famous tribe of Mecca, allies of Quraysh, closely associated with the Prophet.

296. Famous warrior and poet, chief of the Banū Zubayd, called the "Knight" of the Yemen. He joined the Prophet but apostatized after his death, returned to Islam and fought against Rustam at the Battle of Qādisiyyah.

Faithful!" "How so?" asked the latter. "I dismounted at their place," he said, "they regaled me with a few dates left in a curve palm-frond basket, a little ghee remaining in a pot and a large piece of dessicated cheese (*aqiṭ*)." "That's surely a bellyful!" replied 'Umar.

Many is the desert Arab I have seen who dismounted by the owner of a herd of camels and he brought him milk, dates, stoned dates mixed with dessicated cheese, bread and ghee, clarified ghee, and he spent his night (there). Then next morning he started to disparage him—how was it he didn't slaughter a camel from his larger or smaller herd[297]—although he did not know him! If this poor wretch, for fear of his tongue, were to slaughter a camel for any dog which happened to pass his way, hardly a week would roll by but he would be exposed to a succession of bands of people holding their hands out, begging for sustenance from them.[298]

Ziyād (b. Abī-hi) enquired about a man of his friends, and he was told: "He's a hanger-on and it isn't day and day about that he comes to the Amir's midday meal." Said Ziyād: "Then let him come day and day about, for this (habit of his) is detrimental to (my) household." So they obliged him to come day and day about. They found fault with Ziyād for this, averring that he found the man's presence every day to be boring and that he sought by this to warn off others and and remove
65 an encumbrance from himself and / his money. But this, on Ziyād's part, was simply by way of looking after his dependents as a shepherd guards his flock after the manner of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, may Allah be pleased with him. Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) said: "Ziyād imitated 'Umar but he went further and al-Ḥajjāj imitated Ziyād and destroyed people. Yet you consider this was a shameful fault on (Ziyād's) part."

Yūsuf b. 'Umar[299] said to the stewards of his tables: "Make plenty of *tharīd* for it is the toothless man's morsel and a shaykh whose teeth (lit. mouth) are gone may come to a meal you provide, and too a boy whose teeth are not yet firmly fixed. Let them have what you pare off the bone to eat as it will be better for them and more satisfying of craving for meat." Then you said: "He just wanted to hurry and be rid (of them) by finishing quickly, duping them with *tharīd* and filling their hearts (with pleasure) by (a few) bones with only a few scraps of meat left of them." The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, has said: "*Tharīd* is the Lord of food and among women 'Ā'ishah[300] is as *tharīd* among food." Because of the supreme quality of *tharīd* in Quraysh eyes they gave the name Hāshim to 'Amr b. 'Abd Manāf when he shredded up bread (*hashama*) to make *tharīd* out of it, so the name, derived from this (action) of his, replaced his (real name).

297. *Ṣirmah*, a herd of between ten to fifty camels; a *dhawd* is three to thirty camels, according to the lexicons.

298. "Them" seems to me an error for "him", but the sentence might mean: "he would intercept a succession of bands of people, holding out his hand to people and begging sustenance from them."

299. An Umayyad governor, of Thaqīf, related to al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf noted for his severe rule in Iraq, which he emulated. When governing Kufah his rule recalled the days of al-Ḥajjāj.

300. 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's favourite wife. Hāshim, the Prophet's ancestor.

'Awf b. al-Qa'qā'[301] said to his client: "Prepare a meal for us, the left-over of which will (be sufficient to) fill the people assembled at the pilgrimage season to repletion!" You (al-Ḥārithī) said: "When he saw the bread, thick and thin, the roast, the various kinds of dish and how the people took pleasure in the novelty of dish after dish, continuing to eat because of the unending succession of fresh delights, and realized that, had it been one dish only, it would have induced them to eat less, he said: 'Why didn't you make it a meal for one hand, why did you make it a meal for both hands?' " You said: "He was lavish (at first), then he withdrew within limits when he wanted to feed them on *tharīd*, date-cake[302] and anything eaten with one hand not two. Ibn al-Qa'qā' was an Arab who disapproved of a client of his having a distaste for Arab food and a preference for Persian food, wanting his folk to stay the way they were, on the principle that a soft life of affluence would turn them lax and corrupt, and to open a door to a life of luxury would do them more harm than locking a door to excess of pleasures. 'Umar went further than this by way of correction when invited to a wedding where he saw a cookpot with yellow contents, another with red, one piquant tasting, another sweet and one acid, and tipped the lot into a large pot, saying: "When the Arabs eat this—one slays another!"[303]

66

Comment on the Discourse of Abu ('l-)Fātik

Concerning his saying: "A Young Man (*fatā*) may not be a snatcher (*nashshāl*)",[304] this latter, according to him, is a person who takes from the cookpot hot and eats before it is ready, or the pot set down and folk completely assembled.

The sponger (*nashshāf*) is a person who takes (a piece out of) the edge of a *jardhaqah* round of bread, opens it up, then dips in the top of the cookpot to make it mop up the fat, taking it all to himself to the exclusion of his fellows.

The swallower (*mirsāl*) falls into two categories of persons—one of these, when he puts in his mouth a bit of *harīsah*-paste or of a *tharīdah*, a piece of *ḥaysah*-date[305] cake or a rice dish, gulps it down straight into his pharynx (without chewing it). The other type is a person who, when walking in a tangled thicket of palm-slips[306] or bushes, grasps hold of the end of a palm-frond or branch to push it away from his face, and, when he has done what he wanted, lets it go from his hand and inevitably it hits the face of his companion following him, but he takes no heed of this and does not even know what has happened to him.

301. A Tamīmī Dārī of the desert Arabs of Basrah who came with his father on a deputation to the Prophet.

302. *Ḥays*, but the recipe in *A Baghdad Cookery Book* (p. 53) is probably much more refined than the Arabian *ḥays*. Meat on the bone has to be eaten using both hands, and so meat is intended here.

303. Explained as meaning the Arabs will fight with each other luxuries and easy living.

304. *Nashshāl*, generally, pickpocket.

305. For a Baghdad *ḥaysah* see Appendix 37.

306. A palm branch is planted in a pit and soon develops a thick growth of side shoots.

Concerning the crammer (*lakkām*)—he is a person who has a piece of food in his mouth, then crams (lit. delivers a blow to) another in on top of it without having chewed the first piece properly and swallowing it.

The sucker (*maṣṣāṣ*) is is a person who sucks at the medullary cavity of a bone after extracting the marrow from it, taking it all to himself to the exclusion of his fellows.

Concerning the scatterer (*naffāḍ*)—he is a person who, when he has finished washing his hands in the basin, shakes his hands free of water, splattering his fellows with it.

Concerning the bath masseur (*dallāk*)—he is a person who cleans his hands well with lye[307] and rubs it well onto the napkin. It has another explanation but it isn't what you'd suppose; it is amusing and will turn up in its place (in the book) if Allah will.

The hollower-out (*muqawwir*) is a person who hollows out the centre of *jardhaq* bread rounds, taking the middle parts all to himself and leaving the outside edges[308] to his fellows.

67 The siever (*mugharbil*)[309] is a person who takes the salt-cellar and riddles it round like a sieve to collect together the spices it has to season it, taking this all to himself to the exclusion of his fellows, not caring that he is leaving their salt without seasoning.[310]

The speaker with his mouth full (*muḥalqim*) is a person who speaks when a mouthful (of food) has reached his windpipe. To such a man as this we say: "Disgusting! Stop talking until you're able to do so."

The choker (*musawwigh*) is a person who takes large mouthfuls (of food) and keeps on choking and helping it down with water.

The sopper-up (*mulaghghim*)[311] is a person who takes the edges of a round of bread or squeezes the back of a date with his thumb in order that they may convey to his mouth more cream, ghee, biestings, milk and part-cooked eggs.

The greener (*mukhaḍḍir*) is a person who rubs his hands with lye to remove the smell of meat and grease (adhering to the hands), until, once they have turned green and black from the dirt, he rubs his lips with it.[312]

This concludes the comment on such of Abu ('l-)Fātik as al-Ḥārithi cited. Concerning what he mentioned himself it is:

The finger-licker (*laṭṭā'*) is notorious—a person who licks his finger and then

307. See note 93.

308. The edges tend to be hard and often part-burned.

309. *Mugharbil* also means low, base, vile, mean.

310. The ingredients used for seasoning are salt, coriander, cummin, cardamom, cinnamon, pepper, assafoetida, Greek assafoetida, *murrī*, black cummin and saffron.

311. *Laghama* means to foam at the mouth of a camel. The allusion will be to the smear of milk etc. left around the man's mouth. The part-cooked eggs are *nimbirisht*, a Persian word.

312. It is explained that he should not apply the lye to his lips without first cleaning his hands so that his mouth will be clean.

puts it back in folk's broth, milk or *sawīq*-gruel (of parched barley or wheat and ghee) et cetera.

The dipper (*qaṭṭā'* (lit. cutter)) is a person who bites on a piece (of something), cutting it in half, then dips the other half in the relish.

The gnawer (*nahhāsh*)—is notorious—he bites at meat with his front teeth in the way a wild animal/lion does.

The stretcher (*maddād*)—he is a person who perhaps bites on a stringy piece of meat not quite cooked, drawing it out with his teeth while his hand pulls it away from him. It sometimes happens that he breaks it by a violent tug and it will be splattered over the clothes of a person eating alongside him. He is also a person who, when eating ripe dates or dry, *harīsah*-paste or a rice dish with his fellows, once he has cleared what was in front of him, pulls what is in front of them over to himself.

The thruster (*daffā'*)—he is a person who, when a bone happens to be in the large bowl and turns out to be in part of what is next to him, will push it aside with a piece of bread until a piece of meat comes in its place, while all the time he appears as if trying to sup up the broth with his piece of bread, without (obviously) aiming at the meat.

The shifter (*muḥawwil*)—he is a person who, when he sees a lot of date-stones before him, contrives to mix them with his neighbour's date-stones.

Concerning what he (al-Ḥārithī) remarked with regard to the guest and the uninvited guest accompanying him, the latter is the guest of the guest. Said Abū Zayd:[313]

68 Guest of guest, uninvited come, is dined
Upon that portion to the guest assigned.

He says: "One can only be a commensal (*akīl*) when eating face to face. The guest, even (accompanied by an uninvited guest) may not always eat with his host." He says: "Because I do not see him it is easier for me to eat a lot!"

Now concerning his saying: "A person arriving uninvited for a drink is less bother to me than one arriving uninvited for a meal", he is maintaining that the "gate-crasher" for drinks is less bother to me than the "gate-crasher" on a meal.

The saying of folk: "*Fulān ṭufaylī*[314] (So-and-so is an intruder, uninvited)" is not basically part of Arab speech, unlike *rāshin* (a person arriving uninvited at a banquet and *lu'mūẓ* (a glutton)—the Mecca folk call the latter a *buraqī*.[315]

In al-Kufah there was a man of the Banū 'Abdullāh b. Ghaṭafān called Ṭufayl who outdid other folk in foraging far afield in search of wedding and marriage

313. Sa'īd b. Aws al-Anṣārī (*ob.* 215/830), known for expertise in grammar, a humourist and collector of lexicography etc.

314. Al-Jāḥiẓ wrote a book on the *ṭufaylīs*, "gate-crashers", which is lost, but al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, a 5th/11th-century author has left us a book of anecdotes about them, *al-Ṭufayliyyun-wa-akhbāru-hum*. Ṭufayl is said to have been a client of the Caliph 'Uthmān c. 'Affān.

315. *Buraqī* is said to be a Hijaz word.

banquets, on account of which he came to be called Ṭufayl al-'Arā'is, Ṭufayl of the Wedding Banquets/Brides and this became a sobriquet of his, a nickname by which he was known, nothing else. So anyone whose way this was of gaining a living came to be called a Ṭufaylī. So says Abu 'l-Yaqẓān.[316]

Then al-Ḥārithī said:

"More astonishing even and extremely odd—you advise me to provide food for hearty eaters and hand over my money to folk, yet you neglect this more than I do. If you assert that I am wealthier and better provided with the wherewithal (to do so), the difference between your circumstances and mine is not that I should be forever providing food and you forever eating it. So when you have used up all you are able to afford in expending your money and providing food, I will realize that you meant well (by me) and had the notion of honouring me. Otherwise you are but milking a milking of which you receive half.[317] You are indeed as the poet says:

Wine he loves while his fellow drinkers pay,
But hates his own coppers to slip away."

69 Then he said: "*Wallāhi*, if I were to stop eating with folk and providing them with food simply on account of al-Aswārī's bad manners I would do so. What do you expect of a fellow who gnaws at a bit of meat to free it from the bone and loses his tooth without noticing it? That is what he did at the house of Ibrāhīm b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Sulaym's client. When he ate he would take leave of his senses, his eyes would protrude, he would become (as if) drunk, dazed and breathless, his face would change colour—going ashen pale and flushing red—his mouth would go dry and he would neither see nor hear. So when I noticed what would come over him and what would overtake the meal I started not to receive him unless we were eating dry dates, walnuts and broad beans. Never did he drop in on me unexpectedly when I was eating dry dates but he ate them dry, supping them in (like a liquid) and toyed and threw away (the stones). He never found dates (in a lump, stored in a *qawṣarah*-basket) but he took a lump the (size of) an ox's skull. He would then take hold of it by both sides and hoist it up from the ground and go on biting into it, length and breadth-wise, lifting it up and putting it down until he had finished it all off. Then his champing[318] was applied to halves and thirds only and he never separated a date from a date. He did things wholesale and was not satisfied with retailing! Never did he throw away a date-stone, pull off the husk

316. Abū Yaqẓān is Suḥaym b. Ḥafṣ (*ob.* 190/806), a source for historical data, genealogies, scandals (!) etc.

317. The proverbial saying: *Fulān ḥalaba 'l-dahra ashtura-hā*, So-and-so has milked the teats of fortune; means that he has experienced the ups and downs of fortune, being like one who has milked the teats of a camel, that which yields plenty of milk and that which does not. In the context here it means that if you do not spend liberally on entertaining me you will be better off thereby and I poorer off.

318. Lit. biting on the bit.

or remove scales from them or examine them as a precaution against grubs and worms. Also, I never saw him but he seemed to be seeking revenge, intent upon vengeance of blood, lustful as a lover, or a hungry man (invigorated?).

"*Wallāhi*, my brothers, did I see a man damaging clay of a slough and wasting sea-water I would assuredly avert my face from him! But when this is the way of life and also the conduct of men of perception, religious devotion and philosophy what do you expect of those not esteemed as they are esteemed and whose conduct does not come up to the level of theirs?"

70

The Tale of al-Kindī

'Amr b. Nihyawī told me, saying:

"Al-Kindī used to say to a lodger and sometimes to a neighbour: 'In the house there is a woman with child and sometimes, because of the nice smell of a pot cooking the cravings (of pregnancy) cause her to miscarry. So when you are cooking divert her appetite, if only with a (spoon)ful or a lick of the tongue, for just a very little (is enough to) still the desire. If, after my telling you this, you don't do it, if she miscarries you'll have to make amends (in the form of) a *ghurrah*[319]—a slave or a slave-woman—whether you undertake the obligation or refuse.' " He continued: "Often he would take to his dwelling enough from the bowls of his lodgers and neighbours to do him for days. Most of them would see through him but pretend not to notice. Al-Kindī used to say to his family: 'You are better off than these land-owners—each household of them has one dish only but you have (several) dishes.' "

He went on:[320] "One day I was taking the midday meal with him when a neighbour dropped in to see him, this neighbour being a friend of mine, but he didn't offer him any of it. I was myself embarrassed on his account so I said: 'If you were to take with us some of what we're eating?' '*Wallāhi*, I've already had (something),' he replied. 'After swearing by Allah', interposed al-Kindī, 'there's no more to be done.' " He went on: "So (his) '*wallāhi*', Abū 'Uthmān, fettered his wrists behind him in such a way he was powerless to take hold (of any thing) or stretch out (to take it), leaving him, if he did eat, that he would assuredly testify against him to unbelief and that indeed he had set up something beside Allah in his (own) house!"

'Amr said: "One day while I was in his house he heard the noise from the next door house of a jar being overturned and shouted: 'Ha! Qiṣāfi!'[321] Answering back

319. Ibn al-Athir, *al-Nihāyah*: the *ghurrah* is a white slave or slave woman (*amah*), a black slave or slave-woman not being acceptable, for blood-money (*diyah*) for the foetus aborted dead. See Appendix 38.

320. This story is repeated with variants from p. 13 and was probably not in the original version of *al-Bukhalā'*. It is inserted here from the Paris MS, designated B by al-Ḥājirī.

321. Qiṣāfi is the name of a slave-women but *qaṣafa* means "to break, shatter"—it looks like a jest. She means al-Kindī was mistaken in thinking water was being spilled onto a mud or plaster floor, so damaging it, but what he heard was only water poured from a bucket or the like.

at him, she said: '(It's the sound of) the well water, by your life!' In the sharpness of her wits the slave-girl was acuter than he was in investigating (what had happened)."

Ma'bad[322] said: "We lodged in al-Kindī's house for over a year, paying him the rent promptly, doing what he wanted and complying with the terms he laid down. I said to him: 'I understand paying the rent promptly and doing what is required, but what is the meaning of complying with the terms?' He answered: 'The terms (of the letting) to be observed by lodgers are that donkey dung, sheep droppings and any fodder left uneaten (by them) shall be his, that they should not throw away a bone or take away sweepings, that he should have the date-stones, pomegranate husk and (a spoon)ful from any pot being cooked, for a woman in his house with child.' He was quite accommodating in this with them and they used to put up with it because of his cheerfulness, his excessive miserliness and entertaining conversation."

71 Ma'bad said: "While I was (lodging) thus, a cousin of mine with a son of his arrived and suddenly a note from him came to me: 'If those two persons who have just arrived are going to stay a night or two I shall put up with it, even though holding out hopes to lodgers of one night entails for me the desire (on their part) to stay for many nights.' So I wrote to him: 'They are only going to stay with me for a month or so.' And he wrote back to me: 'Your house is let (to you) for thirty dirhams—you are six persons—at five per head. So, seeing you have added two men, an additional two fives are due. From this very day you are due to pay forty for the house.' So I wrote back to him: 'What harm does their staying here do you, and the weight of their bodies on the Earth which bears the burden of mountains, and the burden of provision for them which is my responsibility not yours? Write down for me your justification so that I can fathom it!' I didn't realize what it was I attacked in attacking (him) and that I would fall into what I did with him—for he wrote to me:

" 'The reasons leading to this are many, self-evident and recognized, one of which is the quick filling of the cesspit and the great inconvenience involved in cleansing it. Another is that with many feet, much treading on the surface of clay-covered roofs and floors of rooms plastered with gypsum and a lot of going up and down stairs, the clay thereby gets worn, the gypsum-plaster detached and the stair treads broken—to say nothing of beams sagging, being so much trodden upon and breaking because of the excessive weight. When there is constant coming and going, opening and closing, bolting and withdrawing of bolts, doors get broken and the metal seating into which the bolt is shot gets torn out. When there are lots of children and greater number of people in the household, door-nails are torn out, every wood lock[323] is pulled off, every metal sieve pulled out, every fenced

322. Ma'bad is perhaps the leading scholastic theologian and Mu'tazilī mentioned by al-Jāḥiẓ in *al-Ḥayawān*.

323. Illustrated in Lane, *Modern Egyptians*, London, 1895, 38, common in other Arab countries. The metal sieve would be over an outlet or waste pipe, but it might mean the metal seating into which the bolt is inserted.

place broken, little pits for the *zadw*[324] game dug out, and they smash up the paving in it (the house) with wooden sleds.[325] The afore-going besides the destruction of walls by (driving in) pegs and wood for shelves.

72 " 'When there are many of the family, visitors, guests and drinking cronies, a lot of water needs to be poured and large water jars that drip and (porous) jars that percolate must be brought into use, up to many times more than previously. How many a wall has the lower part of it eaten away, the upper part crumbling, its foundations giving way and its structure threatening to collapse—all due to a dripping water jar, (water) percolating from a jar, the excessive (use of) well water and bad management. They require bread to be baked, meat cooked in broth to be prepared in proportion to their numbers, fuel and heating. Fire spares and leaves nothing and houses are just firewood to it, every item of furnishings in them food for it. How often a blaze has swept away (my) source of income. (Through a fire) you will have involved the people living in (the house) in the grossest expenditure. Perhaps this may take place when (they are) extremely hard up and in dire straits. Perhaps this evil (brought about by you) may spread to the neighbours' houses and neighbouring persons and properties. If, at this point, folk were to leave the owner of the house to the measure of his misfortune and extent of his calamity, it might be bearable, but they regard him as ill-omened and continue finding it uncomfortable to speak of him, blaming him greatly and reproaching him harshly.

" 'Yes indeed! Then they make the kitchens in the upper rooms over the ceilings[326] although there is plenty of space on the ground floor of the house and ample room in the courtyard—despite the danger involved to persons, the unwitting exposure of goods to destruction, laying women open to evil-doers on the night of a fire, and at the same time to their intrusion on a hidden secret, a concealed person in seclusion, a guest in hiding, a house owner hiding himself, some forbidden liquor, some suspicious letter, a lot of money intended to be buried but the fire had overtaken its owner before he could do that with it, and in many circumstances and affairs with which folk do not like they become acquainted. Then they set up *tannūr* ovens and stand up cookpots on the raised part of the roof where there is only a light covering of clay between them and the cane and beams—a thing that does not protect (them from fire etc.(?)). This, despite the trifling trouble it would be to set them up properly and the (consequent) tranquillity of minds with regard to the places where damage could arise through them. If you set about this, on my behalf and yours, remembering (what it involves) it would be marvellous. But if you disregard your responsibility

324. The game seems to consist in hiding nuts or stones in the pits and asking another player to guess "odds or evens".

325. Lane, *Lexicon*, 623. A wooden thing with which a child is driven along and which, passing over the ground, sweeps away everything against which it comes.

326. Kitchens in south Arabia tend to be on the top storeys or roofs.

for my properties and forget your responsibility for your own properties, that would be even more of a marvel!

" 'Many of you refuse to pay the rent and one defers payment of it until, when
73 months (of arrears) he owes have accumulated, / he runs away, leaving those to whom they are owed starving, regretting their leniency and kindness over requiring payment. Thanks and gratefulness from them are withholding of what is due to them and stealing off with their provisions.

" 'The lodger lodges in them when he does, we having previously swept and cleaned them to look nice in the tenant's eye and so that a person seeing them will want them. When he vacates (them) he leaves them a dung-heap and dilapidation, only repairable at grievous expense. Then there isn't a wooden door-bar left which he hasn't stolen, a ladder he hasn't carried off, building material he hasn't taken away, a water-cooling jar with which he hasn't gone off. He never stops beating clothes (to whiten them), pounding in the large and small mortars on the ground floor of the house, banging on chopping blocks, stone supports for cooking pots set in the floor and the wooden projecting windows.[327] If the house has a tiled floor or is paved with baked brick and the owner of it has set a rock in a part of it upon which the pounding is to be done, to save the rest (from damage), (their) lack of care for others, hard-heartedness, deceit and miserable character prompt them to pound away wherever they happen to be sitting and to ignore what they are ruining. He provides no indemnity for this, nor does he seek permission from the owner of the house, nor yet privately asks forgiveness of Allah. And withal he considers it exorbitant that for his part he should put out ten dirhams per annum, but he doesn't find it exorbitant that the owner of the house has laid out a thousand dinars on the purchase (of it). Does he call to mind what the return is to me, paltry as it is, without recalling what comes to him in such great measure?

" 'So—and the passage of days which unravel what is twisted tight, wear out the new, and separate all that is collected together, work on houses as they work on rocks, taking from dwellings what they take from all, dry and juicy, in the way they turn what is juicy into dry, what is dry into withered and what is withered into nothingness.

" 'Dwelling houses have a short term (of life) and limited existence and it is their tenant who enjoys the benefit of them and advantage of their amenities. He is the one takes the shine off their newness and takes away their (fine) appearance. Through him they become decrepit and through his bad management they lose their life. So when I compare the cost of restoring them when they become dilapidated, after once having started them, and the cost of repairing and putting them to rights between then (and now), then I set what I have received by way of income from them against that and the profit I have made through renting them, the loss incurred by the landlord is in direct ratio to the profit accruing to the
74 tenant, except that the maintenance costs which I paid out were a lump sum

327. In which water jars are put to cool.

whereas what I received by way of income came in by instalments. This is in addition to poor payment performance and the necessity to continue dunning (the tenant) for a long time—to say nothing of the lodger's hatred of the landlord and the landlord's love for his tenant—because the landlord desires the physical health of the tenant, a quick turnover if he be a merchant and active (market) in what he turns out if he be a craftsman. The tenant's dearest wish is that Allah distract the landlord from him in whatever way He will—by personal affairs, if He will, if He will, by current happenings, if He will, by imprisonment and, if He will, by death! The point upon which his wishes turn is that he be distracted from him—after which he doesn't care how he is distracted, except that the more intensely it preoccupies him the more pleasant it is to him, the more appropriate he should feel secure and the better reason for him to feel at ease. Nevertheless, if his trade is slack or his products aren't selling, he persists in demanding a reduction of the basic income (the landlord receives) and a rebate in the rent he gets. But if Allah bestows upon him profits in his business activities with a lively demand for his products, he doesn't think to add a *qīrāṭ* to his obligation (to the landlord) or pay a copper before it falls due.

" 'Furthermore, if the rent is in sound coin he pays most of it by instalments; if it is in halves and quarters he pays coin made up of pieces cut (from dirhams or dinars), not forgetting to slip in a dirham plated with mercury, one covered with antimony (*kuḥl*), a base coin and counterfeit dinar,[328] trying to cheat him over it, resorting to any trick and devoting himself to his (swindling) by every possible means. If, subsequently, they return any to him he knowingly swears a false oath[329] that they are no dirhams or money of his, that he had never seen them and they are none of his property. If the messenger is the slave-girl belonging to the owner of the house he seduces her, perhaps makes her pregnant, if a lad he tricks him and perhaps debauches him.[330] All this! To say nothing of prying into the neighbours' affairs, molesting women neighbours, stalking their fowls and exposing me to their recriminations. Perhaps he considers them half-witted and exerts himself to corrupt them and put them to shame. He keeps pushing them on by making advance payments (on their property) to them, exciting appetite in them, opening up before them ways to spend money in order to render them incapable (of meeting their commitments) and to profit from them (to their disadvantage) until—when he has them in his grip—he forecloses on them, holding them in a noose until they can free themselves only by selling part of the house, or asking for the whole (house) to be pledged in security so that, through loss of the principal,

328. The pieces of dirhams would be used for smaller change, and perhaps weighed. Dirhams to which *kuḥl* (kohl) was added would be increased by a *dānaq* or two which seems to imply they would be reckoned by weight.

329. *Yamīn ghamūs*, an oath that plunges the swearer into sin, Lane, *Lexicon*, 2295.

330. *Shaṭara bi-hi*. *Shaṭara* means to divide in half, and the sense is obviously homosexual, but for *shuṭṭār*, gangsters etc., see note 259.

he may profit by exemption from the rent notwithstanding his long residence (in it). Perhaps publicly he maintains it was a sale but privately he makes it a pledge as security. Thereat he demands from them payment without deferment and enters a claim for it before the time it falls due.

" 'Perhaps he will go so far in making show of his inability and the difficulty he finds in paying the rent as to claim that he has a partner with a hand (in the matter), so that he constitutes one of several opponents and is a litigant, not a person in illegal possession. Sometimes he would take (the key from) them, being
75 accompanied by a woman / with whom he would fornicate, for he would turn looking for houses to rent and investigating the condition of dwelling houses into a pretext for entering them and staying a while in them. When he had stayed in the dwelling and had his will of her, he would hand back the key. Sometimes he would rent a dwelling-house in which there was something requiring repair and buy some of what was needed to put it right. Then he would look for a well-dressed workman and neighbours owning receptacles and tools and when the workman was busily occupied he would appropriate everything he could lay hands on, leaving them muddled, not knowing where to turn. Sometimes he would rent (a house) on the side of a prison so that the people inside it might make a hole (through the mud wall) to him, and beside a money-changer to make a hole through it, calling for long delay(s) and cover, ample time and security. Sometimes the lodger would commit a crime leading to the demolishing[331] of the landlord's house since he had committed a murder or wounded a man of honour (*sharīf*). The authorities would come to the house, the owners of which would either be absent, orphans or humble folk (*ḍu'afā'*),[332] but they would do nothing to it apart from levelling it to the ground.

" 'Furthermore, houses are treated ill and owners of them are victimized and ill treated too, folk most easily taken in by folk, the most guileless of them in heart in the extreme. Namely because anyone who hands over his house with its fabric, teak (beams), doors, iron (fittings) and the gilding of its ceilings to a stranger unknown, puts it in a position of risk and exposes it to great danger. He has virtually become a depositor and the man who rents it has come to occupy the position of a trustee. Moreover, fraud and bad management have an effect upon house property far more immediate than on any other articles held on deposit. Besides which, the most upright of tenants to whom they entrust the expenditure, when a place in a house requiring repair is discovered, accountable at the period that has elapsed between one new moon and the next, is the very one to take a cut on the building (costs) and add something to the reckoning. So what do you expect of

331. Demolition of the house of a man who has committed a serious crime or political offence, probably when the criminal could not be apprehended seems to have been a regular form of punishment, as it still is in south Arabia.

332. *Sharīf*, noble as opposed to *ḍa'īf*, a man who does not bear arms, a peasant or one of the despised occupations. The word is used in the Qur'ān of the non arms-bearing groups.

folk, the most upright and best of whom are these? You sometimes even sub-let revenue-yielding estates belonging to another individual at a rent higher than that at which you rented it from him. So behave with me as you behaved with them and give me, on your part, the same as you want from them. Sometimes you build on land, and when the building passes into your hands, even when the land belongs to someone else, you claim partnership and make it like a letting, even making it out to be hereditary property or inherited from forefathers.

" 'Yet another crime—namely that you have destroyed the capital value of my properties, ruined my revenues (derived from them) and, through your
76 bad / management of them, brought about a depreciation in the prices and my revenue (from them) until the returns from the houses have dropped in the eyes of those in easy circumstances and affluent, those of ordinary folk and the rifraff. So they put you off by any sort of trick and divert their money in any other direction (than buying my houses). Even 'Ubaydullāh b. al-Ḥasan remarked, propounding it as a maxim—which has redounded as a counter-argument against me to my detriment—to wit in his declaration: "The return on (renting) a house is a deposit for the sale[333] of it and the return on palms provides a bare living. The return is the return on the crop and the two breeding animals (camels and sheep)." It was my kind way in dunning for payment only that has brought me to this pass and my patience with your remissness in paying. You pay me instalments but you are due to pay it in a lump sum and you postpone payment to me although it has fallen due by you. This is the reason why the returns from the houses, notwithstanding that they were more valuable and provided a larger income, have become less valuable and worse as a capital asset than all (other sources of) revenue.

" 'You are worse to me than the Indians and Greeks, than the Turks and Daylamites, since you are closer at hand to do (me) mischief and more consistent in doing (me) ill. If this be characteristic of you, the front you show and your conduct over a thing which you are obliged to have, how would you be if you should be troubled by something which you have ample scope to avoid, and over which (various) ways of acting occur to you—of which you have a choice without (their) being in any way compulsory on you?

" 'All this, coupled with your declaration that staying in rented houses is more sensible than staying in houses purchased. You say: "Because the purchaser has acknowledged his pledge to pay and accepted stipulations upon himself, becoming thereby under duress and pledged to pay the price of (the house)." Anyone who takes over a house has set up a guarantor who is not responsible and a sponsor who does not discharge his obligations. If he resides in it the house lays burdens on him and exposes him to troubles—if his neighbours treat him badly, his (social) standing is not known, his place of prayer at some distance, his market is a long

333. I understand this to mean that by accepting a rent for your house you are already part way to selling it.

way off, his requirements become many and varied, he thinks he has made a mistake in choosing it rather than some other and that he was not in his right senses when he bought it in preference to another. Anyone come to this has turned slave of his (own) house and his neighbour's servant.

" 'The tenant holds the choice in his hands and it is his to command—any house is a place of his for recreation if he so wishes, a commercial establishment if he so wishes, a dwelling house if he so wishes. He does not have to put up with the merest slight because of it nor the least disdain; he undergoes no humiliation, no ignominies are forced upon him, nor has he to be on his guard from the envious (with the evil eye); he does not have to cajole persons coming to him with some pretext or other.

" 'The purchaser (on the contrary) is forced to swallow draughts of bitter herbs and is plied with the cup of wrath; he is forced to toil to obtain his needs and he must undergo humiliation even if he be a man of haughty pride. If he forgives, he
77 forgives, suppressing his anger / and this on his part is applied only to (covering) his impotence (to do otherwise), and if he seeks retribution he becomes exposed to worse than the thing he disliked. The Apostle of Allah said: "The neighbour before the house" and "The companion before the road".[334]

" 'You maintain that paying the rent by instalments is easier for (the tenant) seeing it is (paid) bit by bit and that hardships coming all at once overwhelm the ability (to confront them), but when they arrive piecemeal and separately the only person to pay any heed to them is one who misses them and remembers them. The purchase price is paid in a lump sum and it makes a gaping hole in one's money and a penetrating thrust (into it) and it's not every hole that can be patched nor every outlay that brings a return. (You maintain) that he (the tenant) is safe from fire, flood, tilting of a pillar,[335] cracking of a beam, yielding of foundations, falling of a wall, bad neighbourliness and the envy of someone similar (to yourself), and that (the owner) is perpetually in trouble or in expectation of trouble. You say: "If he is merchant, spending the price of the house upon various sorts of merchandise brings in greater profit and investing it in several kinds of articles of commerce is more astute. And if he is not a merchant, what I have exposed prohibits him and what I have recounted restrains him (from purchasing a house)." Regard for someone with whom you live closely, what one owes to a neighbour, the need of a place in which to live and the suitability of a dwelling do not stop you from advising folk not to buy. The stagnation of the market in houses brings a drop in house prices, encouragement of the tenant (to withhold the rent) and to ask for a rebate on it and depreciation in the capital value of the property itself.

334. In Arabian customary law this applies to a companion capable of fighting attackers in your common defence, not a *ḍa'īf*.

335. This is a legal formula, evidently of customary law, strikingly close to a similar formula in Tarīm. The tilting of a pillar probably means the collapse of part of a house. A municipal organization would probably be required to deal with such crises. Cf. Balādhurī, *Anṣāb al-Ashrāf*, IV A, Jerusalem, 1971, 180, for a similar cliché at Basrah.

You maintain that you have done well by me in pressing folk to rent because of the ease and prosperity that come about through so doing. And you want to benefit me by making renting appeal to them! On the contrary you just want to do me down by your persuading them to hold off from buying. Any folk must be judged by the way they act and the actions predominating in their conduct. All these reprehensible traits are to be found in you, each of them evidence against you, each inviting to suspicion of you and the necessity of wariness of you. You haven't a single commendable quality, no pleasing nature (in your approach to) anything we have to do with one another.

" 'I have already pointed out to you that the rules for visitors are the same as those for residents and that anything extra involves an (additional) share of rent. And, you citizen of the people of Basrah, were I to pretend not to notice an extra two men, I would not put it past you, in line with what I have seen of you, to hold me to that, so it seems, until the rent paid for one person becomes the same as the rent for a thousand, staying the same as going, vacating (the house) the same as occupying (it). Moreover, if I were to refrain from demanding payment (of rent) from you and neglect to give you notice of what you owe, my kindness would undoubtedly go for nothing since you take no account of the extra (lodgers).

78 " 'The ancient ('Antarah)[336] said:

" 'Ingratitude comes ill to the bountiful heart.

" 'A latter-day poet said:

" 'Ingratitude rewards my kindness, as exchange.
Oft times, from kindness a man ingrates will estrange.

" 'You prosecute me with the hatred of the Mu'tazilah for the Shī'ah, what lies between the people of Basrah and Kufah, the enmity between Asad and Kindah,[337] and the annoyance with the landlord that the tenant feels in his heart. Allah will support me against you. *Wa-'l-salam* (Peace).' "

Ismā'īl b. Ghazwān said: "How divinely gifted was al-Kindī! How sound he was! How well he set out his argument, how honest he was, how well founded was his way (of handling things). I saw him address a crowd in which were none but corrupt persons or such as make a virtue out of vice for the vicious, such as a poet who wishes that folk, all of them, should pass beyond the frontier of spendthrifts to the bounds of the insane, such as garrulous fellow ready to devour (the property of others) and the fawning sycophant. He said:

'You call "miser" anyone who defends property against (all) kind of mistakes, fortifies it for fear of trickery and guards it in apprehension of the humiliation (of

336. Famous pre-Islamic poet. The verse is from the *Mu'allaqat*.

337. The Mu'tazilah, so-called "Rationalists", would be opposed to the more extravagant of the ideas of the Shī'ah about 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. Asad, a north Arabian tribe was instrumental in the disintegration of the power of the south Arabian Kindah hegemony over much of pre-Islamic Arabia. Basrah and Kufah were rival cities in southern Iraq.

losing it), aiming thereby to humiliate and disgrace him. You call someone a man of liberality who, ignorant of the virtue of riches, has not experienced the humiliation of poverty, gives immoderately, is careless of mistakes, holds wealth in small esteem and demeans himself by generosity to others—by which you mean to praise and belaud him. But have your doubts where you yourselves are involved, about anyone who places you before himself, for anyone who makes a mistake about himself is all the more capable of making a mistake with regard to a person other than himself and anyone who makes a mistake over his outward temporal affairs and what exists in a concrete sense is all the more capable of making a mistake in his inward religious faith and what exists in the mind. You commend an individual who has assembled (all) sorts of errors and criticize an individual who has assembled (all) sorts of correct things. Be fully aware of them and do not trust them under any circumstance.' "

79 Ismā'īl said: "And I heard al-Kindī say:

" 'Money belongs only to him who guards it, riches to him who keeps a hold on them. To guard money, walls are built, doors hung, chests contrived, padlocks made, seals[338] and seal-rings engraved, accounting and book-keeping taught. These precautions they take solely for money, but you are a blight on it, grubs infesting and canker-worms corroding it. An ancient said: "Protect your brother except against himself."[339] But, assume that already you hold it in castles, set among great masses of rock, without friend, messenger or assistant being aware of it (being there)—who will stop *you* making deeper inroads upon it than a thief and attacking it more ferociously than a thief bent on seizing it by force? Suppose you have fortified it against any hand that does not have possession of it—how will you fortify it against the hand that does possess it, since the latter has tighter control of it and more compulsive impulses to be at it—and we know that keeping a hold on money is far more difficult than accumulating it? Are folk got at by anyone except themselves and, after themselves, by those in whom they trust? Money belongs to a man who looks after it—regret is the portion of one who wastes it. Spending is wasting even though you grace it by that name and enhance it with this title.

" 'You maintain I call miserliness "thrift" (*iṣlāḥ*) and avarice "economy", just as people call rout "withdrawal", obscenity "plain speaking", dismissal from governorship "transfer" and the oppressor of people who pay land-tax (*kharāj*) "thorough". Nay, indeed you are such as call prodigality "generosity", boasting of what one has not got a "generous disposition", and a man's small regard for himself and his posterity "liberality". The Apostle of Allah said: "Charity begins in the home."[340] But you seek to enrich the children of others by impoverishing

338. The *rawsham* is a small engraved tablet, stamp or seal with which repositories of wheat and grain are sealed, or a seal on a large jar.

339. Explained as, by consorting with spendthrifts you do more harm to your property than do your enemies.

340. Lit. begins with those dependants you have whom it is your duty to support.

your own children, to aid the stranger by reducing your own near relative to penury, and shower favours on someone who will never leave you, someone who, if you were forever giving to him, would assuredly be forever taking from you.'

"You know what our friend said to the man of Taghlib,"[341] he said: "You man of Taghlib, I used to make (you) a regular allowance as long as this stream ran and make (you) a regular allowance after what I used to receive (from the land watered by the stream?) was cut off. *Wallāhi*, if I were to give to you (now) I should not get to you without passing over those with a better entitlement (to an allowance) than you. If I were to let people get at my property they would certainly remove my house brick by brick. There would be left me of it, *wallāhi*, only what I had prevented people (from taking away). But, I say, if I let people get hold of my person, after robbing me of my fortune, they would assuredly claim I am a slave."

80 Ismāʿīl said: "And I heard him say:

" 'I marvel how a man with just a few dirhams can sleep, but a man who cannot sleep for joy and one who cannot sleep for worries are not on the same plane.' He continued: 'The Apostle of Allah said, in reference to a man's testamentary disposition on his day of need and necessity,[342] before he draws the death-rattle in his throat: "A third—and a third is a lot."[343] The jurist approved this but the Upright wanted to reduce the third somewhat because of Allah's Apostle considering the third a lot, and because of his saying: "That you should leave your children well off is preferable to leaving them indigent, putting out their hands to folk (for charity)." The Apostle of Allah was kind to our children with what remained after his kindness to us. So how can you recommend me to prefer yourselves over myself, put your children before my children—to gain praise at the expense of riches—to treasure up the wind and choose the mirage in place of gold and silver?' "

Ismāʿīl said: "And I heard him say to his children and friends:

" 'Keep off ripe dates when they begin to come into season, the first crop, fruits at first ripening. For appetite leaps at novelty and takes a notion to anything coming as a surprise. There is a sweetness and delight in the freshly arrived, joyousness and seductiveness in the new. Appetite, when you resist will desist, and when you restrain will refrain. Appetite is yielding, easily frightened away, intimate, puts up with what you impose on it and fades away if you disregard it. Even if, at a first (attempt at) suppressing (it) you cannot restrain all its demands and check all its whims, these will grow less in number and become less acute. When this takes its effect on it, take it to task over the expensiveness

341. A warlike Christian tribe of northern Iraq.

342. Explained as need of Allah's mercy and the necessity of being provided with meritorious acts.

343. The Tradition from which the quotation comes is in Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Waṣāyā*, 2. One of the Prophet's Companions asks if he should make a testamentary disposition of all his property, to which the Prophet replies: "No". Eventually he recommends a third with the words *supra*. The Tradition is introduced by the Prophet's words that follow.

and scarcity of those first fruits. Bringing up the expensiveness and rarity forms a sound argument and cogent reason to (human) nature. When (appetite) responds to you over the first fruits impose on it the same restraint as when they first turned plentiful, and combine lessening of the craving and of its power to overcome you with the amount the dates have become cheaper and more plentiful. By such reckoning you will find dealing with the craving tomorrow exactly the same as you found it today, until the fruit season is over, and you will be exactly as you were in your initial situation when you began to struggle
81 against your craving / as temptation and whim as (your) foe, you will be deluded by them, too weak to resist them, and will entrust yourself to them—they are an ever-present foe and most evil guest.

" 'So assure me (of your resistance) to the first upsurge (of appetite) and I can assure you of perfect ability to withstand it, a prosperous future, nobility implanted in your hearts, riches for your posterity and people's continuing respect for you. For if the sole advantage of riches be that you continue to remain respected by those who have never obtained a dirham from you, the benefit in that is evident and the profit obvious. If among the blessings of affluence and advantages of easy circumstances be merely that a man of great wealth, should he come into contact with a mighty king, among whose cronies happens to be a person more entitled to respect, a companion (of the king) longer, more sincerely affected to him, more amusing, better informed and sounder (of judgement)—excepting that he is in poor circumstances, possessed of small wealth—then the king in question wants to share out money or distribute *objets de vertu* among them, he will for certain make the lot of the man in easy circumstances more, though he be, in every other respect, inferior to his fellows. The share of a man of small wealth is less even if he be in all other respects superior to his fellows.' "

I have spoken to the Epistle of Sahl b. Hārūn, the views of al-Ḥizāmī, the tales of al-Kindī, the stories of al-Ḥārithī, their arguments, the oddities of their miserliness and their amazing devices.

82 *The Tale of Muḥammad b. Abi 'l-Mu'ammal*

I said to Muḥammad b. Abi 'l-Mu'ammal:

"I see you provide and prepare a meal, spending money on it and doing it really well. Now there isn't much to be gained (by putting out) a little rather than a lot of bread, but folk call mean the man who (puts out) just a few rounds of bread between which they see the top of his table. Yet I notice the 'skulls'[344] of those who eat with you outnumber your rounds of bread. Now if you weren't to put yourself about, making inroads on your money by providing abundance of fine fare, and simply eat by yourself, folk wouldn't blame you or pay any heed to this habit in

344. Cranium/skull is used simply in the sense of "a man".

you and judge you neither mean nor open-handed[345] and you would lead a secure and comfortable existence and be like ordinary folk. If you weren't to ruin yourself by spending the property upon which you subsist or make free with money hoarded away . . . But either you crave fame and name or else (hope) to receive (your) reward (in the Hereafter). So I have fallen into a dilemma over the few rounds of bread (you provide), (on the one hand) approving of your extricating yourself without loss and (on the other) of your acquiring fame and repute through freedom from disparagement and censure. So add to your rounds of bread somewhat, since, by this trivial extra that censure will turn to gratitude and that disparagement to praise. Don't you realize that, after the great trouble to which you have put yourself, you do not come out of this business untouched, with nothing for or against you? So do look into the matter, Allah bless you."

He replied: "Abū 'Uthmān, you're wrong, and the mistake of an intelligent man is always a major one, even if it be slight when the justification for it is taken into account, because when he does make a mistake he does so with energy and thoroughly. So he departs from the right way and diverges from the true path in proportion to (his) reflecting and care. I do not doubt that you have offered (me) advice insofar as your opinion goes, but do have a fear of what I warned you to fear, for it is to be feared!

"On the contrary, what *I* practise shows greater generosity of heart where food is concerned, and reveals that I am at more pains to contrive they do it justice, because bread, when there's much of it on tables, leaves the appetite averse to it. Anything in the way of food, and other things besides food, whenever (over)-filling the eye, it (over)-fills the mind—and this brings deadening of impulse and death
83 to appetite. / Should a man sit by a drying-floor of high quality dates, a heap of superb pears or a hundred bunches of choice bananas, he would partake of them only as long as he feels them a novelty and he wouldn't eat as much of them as when brought him on a clean basket-tray, by a clean servant, covered with a clean napkin.

"Then too, our friends are affable, trusting, relaxed, aware the meal is being prepared for them, and it is more appropriate they partake of it than that servants and hangers-on should tear it apart. If they want bread, surely they will call for it without being too shy to do so. They would have to try this out not less than once or twice—and not judge me mean without showing me where my meanness lies. If they are still shy once I have removed their shyness and still have a poor opinion of me despite the trouble I've taken on their behalf, they're folk all too ready to accuse me of an offence I haven't committed and I'm powerless to please a person accusing me of an offence I haven't committed and to repulse someone wanting to do me harm."

I said to him: "I've seen them eating in their homes and in their brothers' houses

345. Jāḥiẓ has in mind perhaps the phrase *tūfaru wa-tuḥmadu*, "may you receive more and be praised", used in thanking for a gift one does not accept.

under many circumstances in various places. I have also seen them eating with you, and I perceived somewhat of a contrast and a matter sadly out of harmony. Given that in them meanness predominates, weakness (of character) is prevalent and that they are especially quick to think ill, why do you not treat this (whole) matter with what involves no burden and a thing that has no value, or else stop inviting them, sending to them and being eager for them to reply? Folk do not throw themselves upon you but come to you only because of your taking pleasure in (having) them. If you like to try out what I say, leave off the stream of messengers and notes and exasperation with them when they are slow (to reply). Then see!"

He replied: "Bread—when there is plenty (of it) on the table—the leftover of what they eat is not without smearing and spilled grease. I cannot bear to look at the coarse *jardhaqah*-bread, sticky with grease and the thin bread all smeared, and I am ashamed too to serve it once more, so that extra (bread) goes to waste, and Allah loves not waste."[346]

I said: "Folk have it wiped and make a *tharīdah* from it. If you would do likewise and follow their way, that would achieve what you and I want."

He replied: "Don't I know how a *tharīdah* is (made) and of what it is made?[347] How can I prevent myself from imagining and avoid being reminded (of the soiled bread)? Perhaps folk, as days pass, may come to recognize it, so it would be shaming."

84 I said: "You should order it to be given to the family. Then refined white *ḥuwwārī* bread with smears on it will do instead of clean coarse-ground *khushkār*[348]—though wiping and rubbing[349] entirely remove any grease sticking to it."

He replied: "My children/family,[350] Allah bless you, is two families—one I esteem above such a thing, regarding them too highly for that, and another which, to my mind, does not come up to being (privileged) with the luxury of fine white *ḥuwwārī* bread."

I said: "Well in that case make all your bread coarse ground *khushkār*,[351] for the difference between it and *ḥuwwārī* in quality and pleasant taste doesn't make up for the difference between approval and disapproval (for not providing enough)."

"Here's an idea," he replied, "the fairest solution and most to the point—namely, we set this extra bread on a basket close by, within a hand's reach, so, because

346. This echoes the Qur'ān.

347. A *tharīdah* is made of stale bread, shredded and wetted with milk etc.

348. *Ḥuwwārī* is fine white flour of the highest quality that has been sieved several times. *Khushkār* is wheat flour, coarsely ground and sieved.

349. Wiping/rubbing is part of the ritual ablution before prayer and *dalk* is used for massage at the hot (so-called Turkish) bath. Al-Jāḥiẓ seems to use them sarcastically.

350. *'Iyāl*, children, family, even perhaps dependants. A Tradition says: "*Al-nās kullu-hum 'iyāl Allāh*", "all people are the children/dependants of Allah". The two families are doubtless one by a free-born mother, the other by a slave-woman.

351. And provide more of it!

of its proximity, nobody needs call for it, and being near at hand, it makes plenty at his table."

I said: "The very thing that restrains him from asking will stop him from moving it from the basket. So comply with what I say and spend this extra money of yours how you wish. You must realize that all this weighing of one against another and protracted arguing pros and cons is much more damaging to us than what I've kept you from doing and contrary to the way in which I want you to act."

When the time came for the midday meal he shouted to his serving lad—he was stout, a loud-voiced fellow, speaking gutturally, enunciating his long vowels, mouthing his words affectedly, emphasizing the glottal stops, speaking in a decided manner: "Mubashshir, bring enough bread for the total number of heads!"

Said I: "Whoever laid down this arbitrary portion of bread for them and turned it into an absolute rule? Don't you realize that if one of them isn't satisfied by his round of bread, must he not draw on the bread of the fellow next to him, or turn aside with still something left to eat, or else let his hand hang dangling in expectation of (receiving) (more bread) as is usual? We are back where we started and what we were arguing about is all in vain!"

He replied: "I realize just this—it will be easier for me to give up inviting (to meals) than to put up with all this arguing!"

I said: "This is indubitably so. In my opinion you have acted correctly and you may have confidence on your own behalf (of escaping criticism) if you keep to this view."

He used often to say: "Boy, bring in some fried pieces of meat.[352] Make just a
85 little. Get cold water ready for us, / plenty of it!" He would say: "Everything in the World has changed (for the worse), altered and become transformed from what it was, even eating in company. Allah damn[353] (lit. fight) men in whose company I used to eat. Never did I see a large bowl removed from in front of them but some was left over in it. They were well aware that bringing in the (roast) kid was part of etiquette[354] only, of high tables, only set down to mark the conclusion, the end (of the meal), a sign to be at ease and finish off not brought in to be torn to pieces and demolished and had those who served it had evil design on it[355] they would have served it first before everything else so as the keen edge (of appetite) could fall on it. Indeed, when it is served, only a frivolous person[356] will eat any of it or someone who, if he had not seen it, would have raised his hand (from the dishes on the table), not expecting anything more. For this reason Abu 'l-Ḥārith Jummayn[357] said, when he saw it was not touched: 'This is protected from attack!' Had he not seen people behaving in this way he certainly would not have said what

352. See *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 39, for fried dishes.
353. Expression of approbation—what fine fellows they were!
354. Persian *āyīn*, cf. note 96.
355. i.e. to have it assaulted.
356. A person playing with that which does not concern him and from which he does not profit.
357. See note 19.

he did say. They would avoid the egg of the *buqaylah*,[358] and every one of them would leave it to his fellow until the bowl had been removed, with the eggs all as they were. Today if you wish to gratify your eye with a single glance at it and at the eggs of the *sullā'ah*[359] bird you are unable to do so (because greedy persons are in such a hurry to eat them). Many people, certainly, have given up (entertaining) for no other reason but that they would be taking part with ill-mannered persons."

He used to say: "Relishes are enemies to bread. And most hostile of them all are salty preserves. Were it not that Allah took vengeance[360] on (salty things) and granted succour against them through the demanding of water by the person who eats them in quantity, I think indeed that it would annihilate crop and flock."[361] At the same time he would say: "If people were to drink water following a meal they would not suffer from indigestion and the one who drinks least suffers most of all of them. This is because a man does not realize how much he has eaten until he takes some water—sometimes he has eaten to satiety without being aware of it, and when he has exceeded the amount he requires he has indigestion. When he takes some water, little by little that tells him how much he needs, so he eats only as much more as is good for him. Doctors are aware that what I am saying is true, but they know too that were they to admit to this opinion, they would be out of work and their livelihood disappear. What need have folk of people to treat them when their bodies are healthy? According to all popular belief Tigris water is healthier than Euphrates water and Indus water healthier than that of the Balkh river (the Oxus). The Arab saying:[362] 'This is wholesome water on which beasts
86 thrive', points to the fact that water promotes health, so they even say: 'Water / by which there are naphtha wells is healthier than water lying by places from which pitch is extracted.'[363] So take to drinking water after the midday meal since it is healthier."

He would say: "What is a man thinking, when he says: 'Boy, pour me some water', or, 'Pour some water for So-and-so', and he fetches him a jug containing enough to quench his thirst? But when he says: 'Give me something to eat', or 'Bring So-and-so some food', he brings him bread that would be more than enough for a whole company—yet food and drink are allies bound by oath supporting one the other"[364] He would say: "But for the cheapness of water and (high) price of

358. See note 265.

359. Described as a bird with long legs.

360. Cf. Qur'ān, vii, 132, "and therefore we took vengeance on them and drowned them in the sea". The sense is "and drowned them in salt".

361. Qur'ān, ii, 205, "And when he turns away, he strives upon the Earth to do evil therein, and destroy the tilth and stock."

362. Imru'u 'l-Qays speaks of a young she-camel "nourished on wholesome water not disturbed by camels come to drink".

363. I am informed that in Iraq nowadays Euphrates water is preferred though it is a place of *qayr*, pitch, and the Tigris a place of naphtha.

364. The image is tribal.

bread, they surely would not be greedy for bread but sparing of water. People are extremely prone to make much of food when it is dear or scarce in the very place where it grows and its place of origin. These clean carrots[365] and these green 'Abbāsī beans are nicer than Khurāsān pears and garden bananas, but, on account of their limited conceptions, the keenness of their appetites is proportionate to the level of the price and their hankering after anything is in ratio to its scarcity. In their appetites for foods ordinary folks go along with convention, custom or the degree of quality with which they credit the (particular) kind of food. I don't eat carrots cooked in vinegar, olive oil and *murrī*[366] sauce, as opposed to truffles with butter and pepper because of the cheapness, or by way of saving, but because of their being really nice and as they are good for the constitution. He who knows that is possessed of knowledge and he who is ignorant of it is an ignoramus."

It was his way when at home, and perhaps a friend of his came in to see him, (a visitor or) two having preceded him already—he would bring into play at his table such deceits, stratagem(s) and contriving(s) to (even) a part of which Qays b. Zuhayr, al-Muhallab b. Abī Sufrah, Khāzim b. Khuzaymah and Harthamah b. A'yan could not rise. He had a craftiness about it (his table) unknown to 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ or al-Mughīrah b. Shu'bah.[367] Often he would take hold in his hand of a tooth-pick to make a caller on him abandon hope of taking the midday meal with him. If the (aforesaid) friend came in to see him when he had already invited the visitor or two to a meal and he was put out by the third, even although he had invited him and begged him (to accept), he wanted to outwit him, or a fourth, if
87 each one of the two was put out by his fellow. So he would say, / just as he entered and kicked off his sandals, raising his voice, calling out loudly and showing his disapproval: "Mubashshir, bring something for So-and-so to eat! Bring him something for him to partake of! Bring him something!", trusting to his embarrassment, irritation or disdain, eager for him to say: "I've already eaten."

If that poor wretch mistook, his heart quailed and he was so overcome by inhibition as to say: "I've already eaten", and he knew he had got him, caught him and tossed him behind his back, he was not satisfied with that either until he would ask: "On

365. 'Awāmirī–Jārim suggest for *ṣāfī*, clean, *ṣayfī*, summer season carrots, but *ṣāfī* could perhaps mean clean of carrot fly. Le Strange, *Lands*, 222, mentions 'Abbāsī pears but not beans.

366. See note 215.

367. Qays b. Zuhayr was a hero of the pre-Islamic era. His father was the Amir of 'Abs and Lord of the Arabs, Hawāzin in particular. His father was slain and most of the stories about Qays are of his seeking to avenge him. Eventually he became a Christian, settled in Oman and became a monk. Khāzim b. Khuzaymah was a famous general of the early 'Abbasid period and supporter of the 'Abbasids, putting down insurrections with great severity.

Harthamah b. A'yan was a general of the Caliphs Hārūn al-Rashīd and al-Ma'mūn whom he supported against his brother al-Amin. At various times he was governor in Palestine, Egypt and Ifrīqiyah.

Al-Mughīrah b. Shu'bah of the Thaqif tribe, described as one of the four "wily men of the Arabs", a Companion of the Prophet, governor of Basrah under 'Umar till accused of adultery, and later of Kufah. He took part in many of the early Islamic campaigns.

what did you dine?" So he was compelled to tell a lie or resort to subterfuges. When he was certain he had him tied up in knots and left him powerless, unable to move,[368] he was still not content with that until he would say in (the course of) his conversation "I was at So-and-so's house when So-and-so came in to see him and he invited him to take the midday meal with him, but he declined." Then a new thought entered his mind and he said: "In your meal was there a *buqaylah* that you make so well?" Then he had him, but he would keep tightening the noose round him, closing the doors on him and preventing him from changes of mind until, when he had achieved his object, he said: "Mubashshir, seeing So-and-so has already dined and had enough, now bring us something to toy with."

When they set down the meal he addressed himself to the shyest or to the heartiest trencherman among them and asked him for a pleasant story or long historical narrative. He would ask him only for a story involving gestures with hand or head—all this to distract him. And when they had eaten part (of the meal) he would make a show of flagging, of being preoccupied and picking (at the food), satisfied, full, but at the same time neither raising his hand nor stopping eating, just plucking out (a morsel) here, then another there, letting his hand dangle between times. Inevitably one would give up and withdraw his hand—sometimes this would include the whole company. When he saw he had them, he contrived to tear them away from their places around the table, bringing them back to the places where they had been sitting, then he recommenced eating like a hungry man refreshed, remarking: "At times one just eats and at others one just drinks."

Often he would say to his friends when they came to see him early before the sun was up: "Why shouldn't we drink a few bowls on an empty stomach? It kills[369] worms and we'll flush ourselves out a bit—since it removes the residue (in the stomach) and a little after, it renders a meal more appetizing. Getting drunk on an empty stomach is pleasanter than becoming drunk on a stomach over-full. Liquor on a full stomach brings trouble. Furthermore, it shows you are a proper *nabīdh* drinker. Anyone not drinking on an empty stomach is reckoned no gallant by the Fraternity of Young Men, and is considered, among *nabīdh* drinkers, as
88 claimant to a dubious ancestry![370] Only one who has been long away / from meat is in fear of the effect upon his liver of liquor taken on an empty stomach. This early morning draught washes away the smell of part-digested food (from your breath) and does away with indigestion. The only cure for a hangover is to drink many large bowls more. Al-A'shā[371] was well aware of this where he says:

368. This verb is mostly used in the Tradition about the female cat which a woman confined and neither fed nor let go. It is clearly apposite in this context.

369. He means the *nabīdh* in the bowls.

370. The allusion is to a Tradition that a man who claims to be son of a man who is not his father has the curse of Allah upon him. He is not a true drinking man!

371. The celebrated Maymūn b. Qays, "a professional troubadour" excelling in wine-songs. One of his poems is included by some critics among the "Golden Odes". He had connections with the Christian bishops of Najrān.

Many is the cup I've drunken with delight,
With one more recov'ring from it aright.

"This, Allah preserve you, was on the selfsame day they had not a scrap of food in sight nor was a mustard-seed's weight of dessert entering their bellies. Yet, (for him) it was a day of perfect bliss because he had profited by the little food (he had not provided) while enjoying the companionship of his fellow drinkers."

Once when in Baghdad, he bought a shad-fish (*shabbūṭah*)[372] receiving it superb, large! He paid exorbitantly for it, going up to a high price for he had not eaten fish for a long time and being a Basran he could not do without it. He made much of this fish because of its high price, plumpness and size and because of the keenness of his appetite for it. When he thought to himself that he was with it by himself, alone, and had the choice bits to himself, he hoisted his sleeves above his fore-arms and fell upon it. Accompanied by al-Sidrī,[373] I came on him suddenly, taking him unawares. When he saw him (al-Sidrī) he saw blood-red death, pestilence sweeping away (all before it)—he saw fate inevitable—he saw (destruction) breaker of backs[374]—he saw certain disaster—and he knew he had a dragon inflicted on him.

Al-Sidrī left him no time before he had scooped out belly with bladder. Addressing me, he said: "Abū 'Uthmān, al-Sidrī is partial to bellies." The words had hardly left his mouth before he seized the neck and stripped both sides entirely.
89 Addressing me (again), / he said: "Al-Sidrī is partial to necks." He had hardly finished speaking but al-Sidrī had swept off the whole of the back and he said: "Abū 'Uthmān, al-Sidrī is partial to backs." He supposed that al-Sidrī was not acquainted with the excellent (eating) in the tail[375] of the *shabbūṭ* and the sweetness of its flesh, supposing it would be saved for him, supposing too, acquaintance with this to be somewhat recondite. But he was hardly aware before al-Sidrī completely swept off what was on both sides. Had it not been that al-Sidrī stupefied him, depressed and upset him, filled his heart (with resentment) and filled him with exasperation, he would have kept up-sides with him, for he was one of the mighty eaters, but (his) exasperation was an ally of al-Sidrī against him.

When al-Sidrī had eaten the choice bits of it, while he was left among the spectators, nothing of what he was hoping of that fish remaining in his hands, only acute exasperation plus heavy loss, he imagined there was still enough left in the remains of the fish to satisfy him and appease his craving for it. Therein he found solace—this was what would conserve his last vestiges of life, his last breaths! When, however, he saw al-Sidrī slicing the skin into strips and swallowing (them),

372. A highly esteemed fish from the Euphrates, the belly being choice. See Appendix 39.

373. Abu Nābaqah Muḥammad b. Hishām al-Sidrī was a client of Banū 'Uwāl, then of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil. He belonged to the same Basrah circles as al-Jāḥiẓ. Two lampoons of his are extant—he may have been a poor hanger-on of the affluent. The name Sidrī is derived from *sidr* or *nabq*, *Zizyphus spina-christi*, the leaves of which being saponiferous are pounded up and used as soap.

374. The allusion is to Qur'ān, xxi, 11; "How many a town have we *broken* which was unjust."

375. The tail is described as bony nevertheless.

he said: "Abū 'Uthmān, al-Sidrī is partial to the lot!" Chagrin generated within him, trembling threw him into agitation. He was overcome by a tendency to vomit and vomited and defecated continually—then fever bestrode him.

"He turned genuinely penitent and made a resolution (never to) eat with either a hearty or a sparing eater, never to buy another fish, be it cheap or dear—if they gave him one he would not accept it—if he found it lying on the ground he would not touch it."

This is such of the tale of Ibn Abi 'l-Mu'ammal as has come my way. He is dead, Allah pardon him and us.

90 ## *The Tale of Asad b. Jānī*

Now, in winter, Asad b. Jānī used to make his bed of peeled (marsh)-reed[376] since fleas slide off the surface of cane because of its great suppleness and smoothness.

It was his practice, when summer came in and his room became too hot for him, to dig up its (hard earth floor) enough to sink his spade.[377] Then he would pour many jars of well-water onto it and tread it down till it became level. So that room would stay cool as long as it retained any moisture. If it continued to hold moisture and stayed cool he would be content with this cooling while it lasted for his summer. If it dried out before the summer ended and brought back the heat on him he would dig it over and pour water on it again. He used to say: "My cloth bower[378] is earth and the water for my cloth bower comes from my well. My room is cooler and my costs lighter. Moreover, I surpass all of them by virtue of (my) greater wisdom and excellence of the appliance[379] (I use)."

He was a physician and on one occasion he had few patients, so someone said to him: "It is a plague year, disease rampant everywhere—you are a knowledgeable man with long experience, able to diagnose, with knowledge (of diseases). How does it come about that you have this dearth (of patients)?" To which he replied: "For one thing, they know I happen to be a Muslim and folk held the belief before I began to practise medicine, no indeed even before I was born, that Muslims are not successful in medicine. Then my name is Asad and it ought to have been Ṣalīb, Jibrā'īl, Yuḥannā and Bīrā.[380] My surname is Abu 'l-Ḥārith and it ought to have been Abū 'Īsā, Abū Zakariyyā and Abū Ibrāhīm. I wear a shoulder mantle of white cotton

376. These reeds are similar to bamboo. The outer covering is removed and pounded and made into mats (Shākir Muṣṭafā Salīm, *Chibāyish*, 324 and 328). Asad slept on a reed mat on the floor.

377. The spade (*miṣḥāh*) has a triangular blade and shaft six feet long (*Hajji Rikkan*, 90), and a small crosspiece above the blade. See R. Ettinghausen, *Arab Painting*, 84–5.

378. For the *khayshah*, bower, see Appendix 40. The term seems also to be applied to a sort of punkah.

379. *Ālah*, appliance, in philosophical usage, means an organ of perception.

380. Ṣalīb, cross, Yuḥannā, 'Īsā are of course Christian names, Ibrāhīm and Bīrā, probably Jewish.

and my shoulder mantle ought to be black silk. My pronunciation is an Arab pronunciation and my dialect ought to have been that of the people of Jundī Sābār."[381]

91

The Tale of al-Thawrī[382]

Al-Khalīl al-Salūlī said: "One day al-Thawrī—who used to own five hundred *jarībs* lying between Kursiyy al-Ṣadaqah up to the Murrah[383] river and would only purchase any prime land and any parcel of land famed for its fertile soil, select location and abundant crop yield—addressed himself to me." He (al-Khalīl al-Salūlī) went on:

"One day he addressed himself to me, saying: 'Have you dipped your bread in olive water[384] for a relish?' " To which he replied, (he went on), " 'No *wallāhi*,' I said.' 'But', he said, 'If you were to do so, *wallāhi*, you would never forget it.' (He went on), " 'Yes indeed,' I replied, 'should I, *wallāhi*, do so, I would certainly never forget it!'

"He used to say to his children: 'Don't throw away the stones of dry and juicy dates, but accustom yourselves to swallowing them and get your throats to let them go down. Date-stones consolidate the fat on the belly and it keeps the kidneys warm with this fat.[385] Take as an example of this the bellies of milch-goats and all animals foddered on date-stones. *Wallāhi*, if you were to bring yourselves to eat melon-seeds and date-stones, crunch barley and chew lucerne[386] you would find yourselves ready to accept them. Folk sometimes eat lucerne as juicy tender shoots, newly ripened husked barley, stones of unripe green dates and stones of pressed dates.[387] Only one obstacle lies in your way. If you should want warmth, surely you would seek for fat and how could you not look for something that enables you to dispense with the smoke of firewood, the disagreeableness of rising ash and sparks and the heavy cost (of it all)? Fat comforts the heart and whitens the face, but fire blackens the face.[388] I am able to swallow

381. For this celebrated medical school see Appendix 41. *Khidmah* is translated as "experience", its meaning in modern Iraq and Aden.

382. Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Thawrī seems to appear only in our *Book of Misers*, a protagonist of *bukhl*, in defence of which he composed a book, a cultured man with a sharp tongue, a noble of Basrah. In Baghdad he used to stay at Masjid Ibn Ghurbān.

383. Kursiyy al-Ṣadaqah, lit., the Seat of the *Ṣadaqah*-tax, perhaps a tax-collecting centre(?). Murrah, a river/canal in Basrah.

384. The brine in which olives are pickled.

385. According to Pliny and others the Chaldeans used to grind up date-stones to feed cattle and sheep (Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī), as Arabians do to this day. His meanness seems to be in pressing his children to eat animal food.

386. Professor T. M. Johnstone informed me that Bahraynis eat trefoil (*qatt*), the Egyptian *birsīm*.

387. *'Ajwah*, pressed into a mass while moist and kept in a palm-frond basket (*qawsarah*).

388. Cf. Qur'ān, iii, 106, "On a day when faces are white and faces are black". The Ḥaḍramī sense of *'akar*, sparks and dust rising when you blow up a dead fire, is appropriate here.

date-stones and fodder the ewe[389] with them but I say this out of regard on my part for you.

"He used to say: 'Eat beans with their pods for the bean says: "Whoever eats me with my pod has eaten me, but whoever eats me without my pod I am the one who is eating him." Why must you needs become food to your food and provender for what was assigned to be food for you?'[390]

"He used to put out a great deal of property in *'īnah*[391] deals. He had no heir
92 and he used to make fun of some of them, saying on the occasion of witnessing (to a deal): 'You are aware that I have no heir, so when I die this property will belong to So-and-so.' For this reason many folk were eager to make a contract of sale with him.

"I saw him over a long period without ever seeing him but his sandals were in his hand or he was walking the entire day in a sandal with a broken heel, painful to its wearer. He observed: 'These Magians[392] range freely over Basrah, Baghdad, Fars, al-Ahwaz and the world over, in Sindi sandals.'[393] The remark was made to him 'According to his religion it is not considered lawful (to wear) sandals with a thong between the two toes so you only ever find him barefoot or wearing Sindi sandals. But you are a Muslim of property.' To which he retorted: 'Is a man of much property bound to open his purse to support (the poor) and thieves?' 'Is there not an intermediate position between these two?'[394] they said."

Al-Khalīl said: "Al-Thawrī sat alongside the circle[395] of the thrifty businessmen in the mosque and overheard one of the affluent of their number say: 'Add a lining to everything you possess because it makes it last longer. It was for a purpose that Allah made the Hereafter eternal but the Present World transient.' Then he went on to say: 'Often have I seen one lined (gown) outlast[396] four gowns and a single

389. By foddering the ewe, he means feeding his wife. Cf. note 108.

390. Muḥammad Zabārah, *Nashr al-'arf*, Cairo, 1359, I, 774: "It is said in Tradition that a worshipper when he eats food mentioning Allah is (actually) eating the food, but if he eats it neglecting (to do so) the food eats him." For beliefs about the bean see Appendix 42.

391. A merchant sells a man his article of merchandise at a known price for a fixed term, then buys it back from him at less than the price at which he sold it. A proverb runs: "Beware of *'īnah* contracts for they are accursed (*la'īnah*)." This device (*ḥīlah*) to get round the prohibition of usury is common at all times but condemned by the jurists. If the vendor dies without heirs there could, of course, be no re-sale.

392. The Zoroastrians. See *EI*^{2}, V, 1110 seq.

393. A heavy sort of sandal, making a creaking sound, used over muddy ground or at night to ward off scorpions.

394. This is a reference to the dictum of the famous Mu'tazilite, Wāṣil b 'Aṭā' as to whether a major sin (*kabīrah*) makes the sinner an unbeliever or not. "I do not hold that the committer of a major sin is a believer absolutely nor an unbeliever absolutely, nay, rather he is in an (intermediate) position between the two, neither a believer nor an unbeliever."

395. In the Ḥaḍramī city of Shibām such circles of men with business dealings used to meet outside in the late afternoon.

396. Cf. the Iraqi colloquial saying: "*Badlatī tuqattiʿ 'asharah min māltak*", "My suit will outlast ten belonging to you".

turban outlast four mantles[397]—for no other reason but that the folds support each other and the pleats reinforce one the other. So line your reed mats, your palm-leaf mats, your carpets and give your belly a lining[398] of a cool drink after the midday meal!' Said al-Thawrī: 'Of all you've said, this (last) *bon mot* can I understand.' "

Al-Khalīl said: "Al-Thawrī fell ill of a fever, as did his family and servant and due to the violence of the fever they were unable to eat bread so he saved the measure of flour (they would have eaten) over those days.[399] At this he was delighted and said: 'If my home were in al-Ahwāz Market,[400] Naṭāh of Khaybar or al-Juḥfah valley, I could hope to save a hundred dinars a year." For he cared not at all that he and his family should suffer a fever once he had left over the amount of flour sufficient (to keep them fed).'

"He used to say: 'If I see a man buying a kid I pity him, if I see him buying fowls I despise him and if I see him buying black partridge I'll have no business dealings with him or speak to him.'

93 "He said: 'Thrift (*iṣlāḥ*) begins—and this is indispensable—with sewing an outer sole onto sandals, selecting a good outer sole and greasing it every day. Knotting the end of the thong forms part of the dress of ascetics and so that nobody will tread on it and break it off. Another essential of thrift is to reverse the cloth (wound round)[401] the *qalansuwah*-cap when it gets dirty and after reversing it to wash off the dirt (from both sides). Use a Yemeni striped tie-dyed cloth as it is a fabric that gives good wear. Into the same category come turning a summer gown into a winter outer garment[402] and getting a milch-ewe when you have a donkey.[403] Acquiring a donkey that can also take a pack-harness is better than an income of a thousand dinars, since you can use it for getting about and do your furthest away errands on it. You can employ it to grind (corn) and have left over the profit the miller makes from you. On its (back) you can transport both what it needs and you need, such as firewood, and you also bring water on its back. These are all burdens which, when added together, come over a year to a lot of money.'

"He then said: 'I vow that gentleness (brings) good luck and boorishness bad luck. I bought a Madhārī plaid and I wore it while Allah willed and what a good one it was, as a shoulder cloth and cloak. Then I was in need of a *ṭaylasan*-hood

397. The *izār* here is probably a long shawl thrown over the shoulders and covering the whole body.

398. Al-Thawrī is taking a contrary view of "lining" to that expressed in al-Tawḥīdī, *al-Imtā' wa-'l-mu'ānasah*, III, 77. "I said: 'And what is "the lined" (*mubaṭṭan*)?' She said: 'Rice irrigated with milk/curds, *faludhaj*-jelly irrigated with honey and sweet *khabīsah*-cake irrigated with oil, sugar and saffron.'"

399. In Syrian colloquial Arabic one says: "*kīlat tilka 'l-ayyām*", "all these days".

400. Al-Ahwāz in Khūzistān, Ḥuṣn Naṭāh of Khaybar and al-Juḥfah, both in the Hijaz, were notorious for malaria. Al-Juḥfah is near the sea, on the Tihāmah road between Mecca and Medina.

401. 'Awāmirī–Jārim suggest that the cloth is placed under the *qalansuwah*.

402. A *jubbah* is a loose cotton sleeved coat.

403. It is suggested that a milch-ewe will eat the remains of fodder left by the donkey.

so I turned it, Allah knows, into the exterior covering of a quilted outer garment,[404] and I wore it, while Allah willed, and what a fine one that was! After this I took out the sound parts of it and made them into cushions, setting aside the cotton (strips) from it for lamp (wicks). The pieces too small for cushions I put aside for *qalansuwah*-caps. Coming to the soundest pieces still left I sold them to the merchants of porcelain/trays[405] and glass water jars. The pieces without patches on them I assigned as wiping cloths for the serving girl and myself when we perform the functions (lit. needs) of men and women. The waste scraps and what had turned like threads and carded cotton I made into stoppers for the tops of bottles.'[406]

"Many a discourse by him on miserliness did I hear and witness. He was one of the Basrans, staying in Baghdad by the Rughbān Mosque.[407] Never did I see a wealthy shaykh at whose house and to whom so many misers rallied as they did to him, among whom were Ismāʿīl b. Ghazwān, Jaʿfar b. Saʿīd,[408] Khāqān b. Ṣubayḥ, Abū Yaʿqūb al-Aʿwar,[409], ʿAbdullāh al-ʿArūḍī and al-Ḥizāmī ʿAbdullah b. Kāsib."

This Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān was an inveterate miser, strictly correct in speech,
94 sharp tongued. He used to argue / in justification of miserliness, commend it and advocate it, but I never knew of anyone who devoted an entire book to is but Sahl b. Hārūn and he.

This ʿAbd al Raḥmān is the person who said to his son:

"Now my boy, spending of *qīrāṭs*[410] opens the doors to you for *dānaqs*, spending *dānaqs* opens the doors to you for dirhams and spending dirhams opens the doors to you for dinars. Tens open the doors to you for hundreds and hundreds open the doors to you for thousands, until it destroys root and branch, obliterates substance and shadow, carrying away great and small. Now my boy, the (true) explanation of dirham is '*Dār al-hamm* (the House of Care(s))' and the (true) explanation of dinar is '*yudnī ilā 'l-nār* (it brings close to Hell-fire)'. A dirham, when spent with nothing replacing it or substituted for it, is a 'House of Care(s)' to the *dānaq* of a person who spends it. They say a dinar brings (a person) close to Hell-fire because when he spends it without replacing it and disburses it without

404. A *jubbah maḥshuwwah* has a stuffing of cotton between its outer cloth and lining.

405. *Ṣīniyyah*, lit. Chinese, but in modern Iraq, a tray. *Surahiyyah/sarahiyyah* = *ṣalāḥiyyah*, in modern Iraq is a pot of glass, large at the bottom, narrow at the top.

406. This was still so in southern Arabia in 1947.

407. A mosque in the western districts of Baghdad, so called either after a client of Ḥabīb b. Maslamah, an Umayyad general, or a writer and poet who held a post in the Pensions Office under the first Umayyad Caliph. It was a meeting place of ulema, and Basrah people seem to have preferred to stay in its vicinity

408. Jaʿfar b. Saʿīd was a foster-brother of the ʿAbbasid prince Ayyūb b. Jaʿfar and a friend of al-Thawrī. Al-Jāḥiẓ quotes his praise of the cock in contradistinction to the peacock in *al-Ḥawayān*.

409. Abū Yaʿqub Isḥāq al-Khuraymī, from a noble family in Sughd (Soghdiana), a client of an Arab general of the year ʿAbbasid period, ʿUthmān b. Khuraym. He was a poet and biting satirist, accused of being a Shuʿubite.

410. 2 *qīrāṭs* = 1 *dānaq*, 6 *dānaqs* = 1 dirham.

substituting (another) for it, he is left deprived of gain, impoverished, needy, insolvent, restricted in his outgoings. Necessity drives him to menial means of earning a livelihood and evil ways of obtaining a living. Evil ways of obtaining a living bring loss of probity, take away manly honour, make *ḥadd*-punishment inevitable[411] and bring (a man) to Hell-fire."

This explanation he gave to dirham and dinar is not his own, being just something ʿAbd al-Aʿlā al-Qāṣṣ[412] (the Story-teller) pronounced as a dictum. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā, when they said to him: "Why is a dog called *Qalaṭī*?" would reply: "Because it is small and crouches (*qalla wa-laṭā*)," and when they said to him: "Why is a dog called Saluqi?"[413] he would answer, "Because it draws (something) away by stealth, then abandons it (*yastalla wa-yulqī*)." When they asked him: "Why is the sparrow called *ʿuṣfūr*?" he would say: "Because it disobeys and flees (*ʿaṣā wa-farra*)."[414]

It was this ʿAbd al-Aʿlā who used to say in the course of his narrative: "The needy man's shoulder-cloth is a shift, his broth a beet, his *jardhaqah*-bread half (a round), his fish a small fish (*shilqah*) covered in spines,"[415] among many other *bons mots*.

Some (Qur'ān) commentators maintain that Noah, Allah's peace and blessing
95 be upon him, was called Noah (Nūḥ) just because he used / to bewail (*yaNŪḤ*) himself, and that Adam was called Adam just because he was cut out of the skin (*adīm*) of the Earth, saying: "In its brownness (*udmah*) his colour was that of the Earth", and that the Messiah (Masīḥ) was so called just because he was anointed (*musiḥa*) with the oil of blessing. However some of them say: "Because he used not to stay in any one country but it was as if he were a surveyor surveying (*yamsaḥ*) the Earth."

Let our narrative now come back to the strange things about Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān:

Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān liked (sheep's) heads and used to speak approvingly of them and attribute excellent properties to them but he would eat meat only on the day of the Feast of the Sacrifices[416] or the left-over of his sacrificial animal—or it would be at a wedding, a party to which he had received an invitation, or (someone else's) table. He would dub a (sheep's) head "a wedding" because of the different tasty morsels comprised within it—sometimes he would dub it "The Epitome", sometimes "The Thesaurus".

411. e.g. cutting off the hand for stealing.

412. A story-teller of doubtful reliability some of whose tales are recounted in *al-Ḥayawān*. See Appendix 9.

413. ʿAwāmirī–Jārim suggest that *Qalaṭī* is a certain breed of dog. Arab writers suggest that Salūq is a place in the Yemen or from Seleucia, the port of Antioch, or the borders of Armenia. They are the freemen (*aḥrār*) of dogs—i.e. like the noble Arab tribesmen!

414. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā, when asked about the derivation of the *ṭafshīl*-ragout, said: "because it leaps and rises (*ṭafā wa-shāl*)".

415. There are many variations of this saying as reported by various authors, all seeming acceptable.

416. Also called al-ʿĪd al-Kabīr, on 10th Dhu'l Ḥijjah.

He would say: "The head is a single object containing delightful delicacies and different tastes. Every pot and roast is but a single dish but the head contains the brain and the taste of brain is a thing of its own, the two eyes with a taste of their own, pouch of fat[417] between the base of the ear and the back of the eye with a taste of its own—this pouch of fat particularly is more delicious than the brain, smoother than butter and oilier than rendered fat dripping.[418] In the head is the tongue with a taste of its own, the root of the nose with the gristle in the root of the nose, each with a taste of their own, the flesh of the two chaps with its own taste." And on he went till he had divided up the rest of the offal! He would say: "The head is Lord of the body, containing the brain which is the source of the intellect. From it branch forth the nerves containing sense perception; and the body is regulated by it. The heart is just the gate of the intellect, as the soul is what perceives and the eye is the door of the colours. The soul it is that hears and tastes. The nose and ear are but two gates. Did the intellect not (reside) in the head it would not depart as the result of a blow striking it, and the head contains the five senses." He would quote the words of the poet:[419]

When they strike off my head—in my head is the most of me—
And there, on the field of battle, is left the rest of me.

96 He used to say: "For no other reason do people say: 'This is the head of the matter, So-and-so is the head of the squadron, he is the head of the tribe, they are the heads, chiefs and nose of the people,' and derive from (the word) head, headship, headman and So-and-so headed the tribe, but that the head is the model and is given the precedence."

When he had finished eating the head he would take the skull and jawbones and put them close to the holes of ants and the small (variety) of ant and when they collected in it he took and shook it into a bowl filled with water, and would go on repeating this in those places until he had exterminated the ants and small ants from his house. When he had finished with this he tossed it among the firewood to light the rest of the firewood with it.

When "heads' day" came round he would sit his son down with him at the table, but only after going to some length in imposing strict conditions (on him) and after arriving at what he wanted of him. Among the things he said to him were: "Take care to avoid the ravening of young lads, the greediness of farm workers, the manners of wailing women.[420] Put from you the battering of salt-workers and

417. Actually a gland.

418. In modern Iraq *silā'* is animal fat roasted on a pan, often fat of a sheep's tail, cooled and eaten with bread or dates.

419. The verse is of the pre-Islamic poet al-Shanfarā of Azd, composer of *Lāmiyyat al-'Arab* describing his hard life as a brigand and outlaw.

420. They are more concerned with food provided at a wake than in mourning. Islamic law prohibits the assembly of women wailers at graves but the custom persists in most Muslim countries.

workers in clay,[421] the gnawing of desert Arabs and domestic servants. Partake of what is in front of you for your share is what happens to come next to you only. You must know too that when there happens to be something rare in a meal, a choice titbit or tasty morsel, it is for the venerable shaykh or petted boy only and you are neither of those. You may attend receptions, accept invitations to wedding breakfasts and enter friends' homes when you have recently eaten meat but your friends have a keener appetite for meat than you have. It is but a single head so there is no harm in keeping off part of it but taking some (of it). Moreover, I disapprove of your eating meat more than once, for Allah hates the people of a house with a craving for meat.[422] 'Umar used to say: 'Beware of places where animals are slaughtered (and meat sold) for there is an addiction to them like the addiction to wine.'[423] He used also to say: 'An addict to meat is like an addict to wine.' The Messiah[424] said, on seeing a man eating meat, 'Flesh consumeth flesh! Fie on such an (ill) deed as this.' Alluding to meat, Harim b. Quṭbah[425] said, '(Eating too much
97 meat) slays lions!'/ Al-Muhallab said: 'Meat coming to a man with no appetite—that is death bloody!' The ancient said: 'Two reds[426] slay men—meat and wine! And two reds slay women—gold and saffron!'

"Now my boy, get yourself accustomed to scarcity and combatting (your) inclination(s) and appetite. Don't snap in the way vipers do, or champ with the fore-teeth like hacks, or be like ewes eating on and on, or swallowing quickly like camels. Abū Dharr[427] said to those of the Apostle of Allah's Companions who spent freely: 'You gnaw with your front teeth and we munch with our back teeth, but the Appointed Time (Resurrection) is (with) Allah. Allah has preferred you and made you a man, so do not make yourself a brute or a beast of prey. Be on your guard against stuffing yourself fast to repletion and over-eating.' A sage has said: 'If you are fat count yourself among those chronically ill.' Al-A'shā said: 'Obesity makes fools of men of intelligence.'[428] You must know that repletion brings indigestion, indigestion brings disease and disease brings death. A man who dies in this way dies a shaming death, for he kills himself and a man who kills himself is more despicable than a man who kills another. Marvel if you must, but Allah,

421. Salt was worked in the Basrah region about this period. The agricultural workers would have to break up the earth with the *miṣḥāh*.

422. A well-known Tradition from the Prophet.

423. 'Umar's dictum is explained as meaning addition to extravagant living expenses.

424. Pellat, *Milieu*, 218, suggests that Masyah, who belonged to a sect that practised vegetarianism might perhaps be read for Masīḥ. The idea is attractive but no proof is forthcoming.

425. Al-Fazārī, a Companion of the Prophet. There is the proverb: "Wiser than Harim b. Quṭbah".

426. There are various explanations of "the two reds". They were perhaps wine and perfume (*khalūq*) (with a saffron base) which corrupted people. Saffron is used by women as a cosmetic.

427. Abū Dharr, a Companion of the Prophet, was of low social standing, a *ḍa'īf*. The Tradition cited here attributes a certain resentment of richer persons to him. Gnawing with the front teeth implies eating meat and munching with the back teeth the eating of coarsely ground bread.

428. The verse commences: *Yā Bani 'l-Mundhiri bni 'Abdana*, and the saying itself seems proverbial.

mighty is His name, says: 'Do not slay yourselves.'[429] It is just the same (whether) we kill ourselves or one of us kills another—this is the interpretation of the verse.

"My boy, both the murderer and the murdered go to Hell. And if you were to question expert physicians they would tell you that the majority of the denizens of graves died of indigestion, nothing else. You should recognize the fallacy of the man who said: 'One glorious meal and death!'[430] Stick to the dictum of the man who said: 'Taking the frequent casual bite, for whole meals destroy appetite.' Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) said: 'O son of Adam, eat for a third of your belly, drink for a third of your belly and leave a third for meditation and breathing.' Bakr b. 'Abdullāh al-Muzanī[431] said: 'I did not experience the taste of bread until I took to an empty stomach instead of a surfeit and until I wore only such clothing of mine that did use me as (its) servant, and until I no longer ate anything but (food) after eating which I do not require to wash my hands.'

98 "My boy, *wallāhi*, no man performs the bowing (*rukū'*) in the prayer properly nor the duty of prostration (*sujūd*) on an overful belly, nor can a man with a stomach replete humble himself before Allah. Fasting is health-giving and the devout exist on a single meal a day."

Then he said: "For some reason or other Indians live long lives and the desert Arabs have healthy bodies. How pregnantly did al-Ḥārith b. Kaladah[432] opine when he declared that remedy consists in abstinence from food and that malady comes from cramming in food on top of food.

"Why, my boy, are the minds of the Arabs clear and the sensory perceptions of the desert Arabs true, why are monks' bodies healthy, notwithstanding their long devotions in cells, so that they even know no arthritis, pain in the joints, or swellings, if it is not because of the sparsity of (their) food, light provision for travelling and contentment with simple fare?

"My boy, the breeze of the world and enjoyment of life are better than that you should come in the evening to have a stomach over-filled and be destined for a short life. How can you decline to follow a regime which will bring you physical health together with a keen mind, prosperous future, money in plenty and an approach to the angels' way of living?[433]

"My boy, why is the lizard become the longest-living creature, if not because

429. Qur'ān, iv, 48.

430. A common Arabic saying. The dictum that follows is explained by al-Bakrī al-Awnabī, *Faṣl al-maqāl*, 1958, 262, by a verse: "A frequent mouthful, for a moment's pleasure, prevents great eaters of an era from (eating) another like it."

431. A jurist (*faqīh*) and moralist of the Umayyad period, noted for spending extravagantly on his clothes. He means that he ate only bread, after which he would not have to wash his hands.

432. Al-Ḥārith b. Kaladah of Thaqīf was a doctor (*ṭabīb*) in the pre-Islamic era and after, who is said to have learned medicine in Persia and made money from it. He is said to have foretold the death of the Caliph Abū Bakr and himself on the same day.

433. Of the angels, Ibn Mājah says: "Their food is the celebrating of His glory: their drink the proclaiming of His holiness" (Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 445).

it subsists on the breeze alone? Why did the Apostle declare that fasting is gelding[434] if not to set hunger as a barrier to lusts? Get understanding of the discipline of Allah for it is none other than the like of you that he intends thereby.

"My boy, I have reached (my) ninetieth year without any of my teeth becoming loose, any bone of mine being displaced or muscle swollen; I have experienced no buzzing in the ear, watering of the eye or incontinence of urine. There is no other reason for this but a light diet. So if you love life this is the way to live, but if you love death—Allah removes only him who maltreats (himself)."[435]

Such was his injunction on the "day of heads" alone! Nor was anything left his children but rummaging among the leavings and sucking at the bones.

He used only to buy a head at the waxing of the moon, because of the waxing of the brain then. He used only to buy the head of a young animal because the brain of a young animal is ampler and the fat over its eye less, whereas the fat over the eye of an old animal is ampler and its brain less so.

99 They aver that crescent moons and moonless nights[436] have a well-known action on brains and blood, and that in spring and autumn there is a clear difference between them in quality. The desert Arabs and the Arabs maintain that when semen drops into the womb on the first (night) of the new crescent moon, a child will turn out stout and strong, but when it (drops) in the moonless nights, it will turn out puny and thin. The poet's verse is cited:

> She conceived at the beginning of her cycle when the new moon
> Appeared, bringing its first small gleam of light to shine out upon her.
> He thrived, not suckled with a foal already conceived in her, too soon.
> Suckling one child while large with another brings on great dishonour.[437]

Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān would buy this head from all of the sellers of (sheep's) heads of Baghdad except from the sellers of heads of the Ibn Rughbān Mosque and he used to buy it only on a Saturday. The matter (of the choice) between winter and summer raised some perplexity in him, so on one occasion he would buy it at this season, and on another at that.

Now as for his refraining from (buying) sheep's heads at the Ibn Rughbān Mosque, Basrans select the meat of a castrated goat in preference to that of a sheep altogether, sheeps' heads being fatter, meatier, far lower in price and nicer. The head of a young billy-goat has more meat on it than the head of a castrated one because a castrated goat's skin sweats and there is less meat on its head and so its skin, even though it be a goat, does not fetch a tenth of the price the skin of a

434. The Tradition says: "Marital intercourse is your duty and the duty of him who is unable (to perform it) is fasting, for it is gelding."

435. Qur'ān, xi, 44 and 82.

436. i.e. at the beginning and end of the month.

437. I was told by al-Zawawī (in Malaya) that among the Arabian Bedouin if a man's wife becomes pregnant while suckling a child the women of the tribe miscall him. So today it is still much disapproved of.

young billy-goat fetches, and its head is of inferior quality. On this account he passed over it for something else.

As regards his choice of Saturday for buying sheep's heads, butchers mostly slaughter on Fridays so heads are plentiful to the extent of the extra slaughtering they do and because ordinary folk, merchants and artisans have little appetite for eating sheep's heads on Saturday, just having eaten meat on Friday, and because left-overs still remain with most of them—which stops them from hankering (after them), and since people can hardly serve heads and meat on one table.

Now about his perplexity as to how to manage over the difference between winter and summer, the reason for this was that various pretexts would formulate themselves to him and various incentives occur to him in proportion to his hankering for meat and impulse of his appetite, should this coincide with summer or winter. If he bought one in summer, it was because in summer meat is cheaper
100 and heads follow / meat, and because people eat more of them in winter but feel more inclined to leave off them in the hot weather. So he would choose to go for cheapness, as opposed to what was appropriate to the occasion. When, however, in winter (his) hankerings after them intensified, he would say: "One winter head is equal to two summer heads because a stall-fed animal is not the same thing as one pasturing at large, and any animal feeding on sesame-cake, tethered in captivity, is not the same as one which grazes at liberty on desert vegetation." In winter he could be confident of being able to finish it up, given his (sound) state of health and body but he was uncertain he might leave some over in summer, because people's inclinations for eating sheep's heads diminish in summer time. He was apprehensive too of the punishment for the offence he was committing (by having) this left-over and the sin[438] of having such a surplus as this, and he would say: "If I eat them once I am full I might die, but if I leave them to the others in summer, without their realizing the reason why, they'll demand the same of me in winter."

101 ## *Various Tales of al-'Anbarī, Ibn Quṭbah and Fīlawayh*

Al-Makkī told me, saying: "One day I was at al-'Anbarī's[439] house when his mother's slave-woman came with an empty jug and said: 'Your mother says: "I hear you have a water-cooler[440] and it is hot today so send me a drink of it in this jug." ' 'You are lying,' he said. 'My mother is much too sensible to send an empty

438. Al-Jāḥiẓ describes al-Thawrī's disgust over his quandary in hyperbolic language.

439. Perhaps 'Abdullah b. Ḥabīb of p. 211, Lord of the Banū Samurah who would eat neither dates nor drink milk.

440. A *muzammalah* is a large water jar, so called because of the cloths wrapped round it. Clay earthenware is exported to Basrah, "water coolers and filters called *ḥubbs*, often of large size, and *jarrahs*, goblets". *Mzambla*, in modern Iraq, is used for a tap (Wadī'ah Najm). Al-Mutarrizī says it has a hole in it into which a silver or lead pipe is inserted from which one can drink.

jug for me to return it full. Go and fill it with water from your large water jar and empty it into my large jar—then fill it up with water from my water-cooler so that there may be something in return for something.' "[441]

Al-Makkī said: "See there he was, requiring her to give an essential substance in return for an essential substance and an (accidental state) in return for an accidental state, so that his mother would profit merely by the difference between the two accidental states—namely cold and hot, but the number of essential substances and accidental states, (they are) as a like in return for a like!"

Al-Makkī said: "One day I went in to see him and there, beside him, lay a palm-leaf basket of dry dates, and, opposite him was sitting his foster-mother, and whenever he ate a date he tossed over the stone from it to her and she took it, sucked[442] it a moment, then laid it aside." So I said to al-Makkī: "Didn't he leave any of the pulp of the date on the stone?" "*Wallāhi*," he replied, "I once saw her mumbling a date-stone (in her mouth) after sucking it and he shouted at her with a roar so mighty that he couldn't have more had she murdered someone! And all she was doing was to exchange with him the accidental states and hand back the essential substance to him. She was taking the sweetness of the date-stone and replacing it with the wetness of saliva."

Al-Khalīl said: "Abū Quṭbah used to have a land revenue of three thousand dinars, yet out of meanness he would put off cleaning out his sewer until a day of heavy rain and running drainage channels, so that he could hire one man only to remove its contents and empty them on the highway, then the flood would sweep them away and take them to the canal. The place where his cesspit was situated was about two hundred cubits from the place (onto which the ordure) was emptied. So for an extra two dirhams he would put up with waiting a month or two, even if it overflowed onto the highway and folk were dirtied by the ordure."[443]

102 He went on: "One day while sitting with me among some men of Quraysh, he cast a look at the sweepers, when they were emptying the contents of the cesspit and throwing them onto the highway and the floodwater from the drainage channels was carrying them off, and he observed: 'Don't duck, kids, poultry, chickens, heath-cock, barley bread, anchovies, leeks, *juwāf*-fish[444] turn into what you see (now). So why should something be bought at an exorbitant price that turns into the same as something cheap?' "

Al-Khalīl said: "I heard him say: 'Take care not to fart (*fusā'*) in those of your

441. Al-'Anbarī and al-Makkī are speaking in philosophical terms. See Appendix 46.

442. Part of the appetite for dates is sucking the date-stone.

443. Excavations show that a drain ran from the *kanīf* (privy) to a cesspit called *tannūr* (called here *bi'r*, pit) (Ferial Mustafa, *The Arabic House in Iraq in the Islamic Period*, Baghdad, 1983, 130).

444. In Oman the *ṣaḥnah* (here *ṣaḥna'*) is prepared by removing the heads of the dried *ṣīr* fish (anchovy), then pounding the fish and mixing it with the powder of red chillies and the juice of fresh limes or pounded dried limes (Jayakar's notes to his transaction of al-Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān*, London 1904, 189). *Ṣaḥna'* is also described as small salt fish. The *juwāfah* is said by al-Jāḥiẓ to come from the far seas to the Tigris twice a year in certain months.

clothes in which you go out and those of your coverlets in which you sleep for farting brings more lice. *Wallāhi*, I speak only from knowledge.' Then he said: 'Don't you know that sound tans?'[445] 'How can sound come to tan?' I asked. To which he replied: 'A *faswah* is a fart (*ḍarṭah*), but both come from only one bottle—so how can one be pleasant and the other stinking? This then is what shows you that the sound is what tans it!' "

He went on: "They were three brothers, Abū Quṭbah, al-Ṭīl and Bānī, of 'Attāb b. Asīd's[446] children. One of them used to perform the pilgrimage on behalf of Ḥamzah,[447] saying: 'He died a martyr before he could perform the pilgrimage.' The next used to slaughter the sacrificial animal (at the Feast of the Sacrifices) on behalf of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, saying: 'They deviated from the Sunnah (Customary Law) in neglecting (to slaughter) the sacrificial animal.' The last used to breakfast on behalf of 'Ā'ishah on the days of Tashrīq, saying:[448] 'She was in error, Allah have mercy on her, in respect of her fasting on the days of the Feast. Whoever fasts on behalf of his father and mother—I break fast on behalf of 'Ā'ishah.' "[449]

A woman informed of the goings-on told me, saying:

"There was a mourning wake in the Quarter at which certain old women of the Quarter met together and when they saw that the women mourners had got well started in wailing they drew aside and chatted. In the course of their conversation they happened to speak of the dutifulness of sons to their mothers and what they spent in providing for them, each one of them telling of what her son had bestowed on her. Then one of them said: 'But Umm Fīlawayh says nothing.' Now she was a devout woman and her son used to make a show of piety but (his true) religion was avarice. He had a shop at the Cemetery of the Banū Ḥiṣn where he used to sell junk."[450]

103 She went on: "So she turned to Umm Fīlawayh and said to her: 'What's the matter with you that you don't talk with us about your son as they do? How does Fīlawayh act in matters between you and him?' She answered: 'On every Feast of the Sacrifices he used to bestow a dirham on me.' Then she said: 'But he has even stopped that.' Said the woman to her: 'He used to bestow on you a dirham only?' 'That was all he used to bestow on me', she replied, 'and sometimes he ran two Feasts of the Sacrifices

445. A legal maxim states that "tanning of any skin purifies it". So thus the sound purifies the *ḍarṭah* (*'alā qawli-hī*).

446. 'Attāb b. Abī 'l-'Īṣ, belonging to the Umayyad house, a Companion of the Prophet, who made him governor of Mecca. Known for his abstinence.

447. This is quite common in Islam, but under certain conditions.

448. The Ayyām al-Tashrıq come three days after the Feast of the Sacrifices and are so called because of the drying in the sun of the meat of slaughtered animals—as I have seen done at the pilgrimage to Hūd. An alternative but less likely interpretation is that the animals are not slaughtered until sunrise.

449. In Muslim India one can say to someone who is fasting: "Fast with me for the sake of So-and-so."

450. He was called Fīlawayh/Fīluwayh al-Saqaṭī, the seller of second-hand goods.

into one.' "[451] She went on: "So I said: 'O Umm Fīlawayh, how can two Feasts of the Sacrifices be run together? People may say: "So-and-so ran two months together and two days together"—but as for running two Feasts of the Sacrifices together, this is a thing (peculiar) to your son in which nobody shares with him.' "

The Tale of Tammām b. Ja'far

104 Tammām b. Ja'far was mean over food, excessively mean. On any pretext he would pounce upon anyone who ate his bread and prosecute him for every (dirham) of blood-money to the extent that perhaps he might even invent against him (a ruling) that his blood was lawful (to be taken).[452]

It was his way when a drinking companion of his said to him: "No one on Earth is a better walker than I am nor is anyone on the face of it a more powerful runner than I," to say: "What's to stop you when you eat enough for ten? Isn't it but the stomach which carries the leg? May Allah not commend any person who commends you!" If, however, he said: "No, *wallāhi*, I can't walk because I am physically too weak to do so and I get breathless from walking thirty steps," Tammam would say: "How could you walk when you have loaded your stomach with what it would take twenty porters to carry? Can people move quickly unless they eat sparingly? What corpulent man is able to stir himself? A man with an over-full belly is unable to perform the bowing and prostration, so how will it be with a lot of walking?"

If he complained of one of his teeth and said: "I didn't sleep last night because of the pain and throbbing in it," he would retort: "I am amazed. How can you complain (only) of one end and not of the whole lot? And how is there a tooth still left in your mouth up till today? What tooth can stand up to threshing and grinding?[453] *Wallāhi*, Syrian querns would assuredly lose their edge and pounding wears out the stout(est) mortar. I thought this complaint had taken a long time in coming to you. Act gently for in gentleness lies good fortune and be not rough with yourself, for ill fortune lies in roughness." But if he said: "No, *wallāhi*, never have I complained of a (sore) tooth and never has a tooth of mine shifted from its place since I was conscious of my being," he would say: "You silly fellow. It is because much chewing strengthens the gums, reinforces the teeth, tans the gum
105 and nourishes its roots—whereas relieving / the teeth of chewing weakens them. The mouth is just part of a man; just as a man himself becomes strong when he is active and works, but when he rests long (his muscles) become flaccid and slack,

451. Al-Maydānī cites a saying: "He runs Sha'bān into Ramaḍān." *It is said of a man confused by mixing things up.*

452. Al-Jāḥiẓ again resorts to hyperbole.

453. There is here a play on the words *ḍirs* and *ḍars*. *Ḍirs* is a molar tooth/tooth but *arḥā'*, querns, also means *aḍrās*, molar teeth. But in Palestine *ḍars* means a tooth and *ḍars* means threshing in Jordan (A. Jaussen, *Coutume des Arabes au pays be Moab*, Paris, 1948, 253, *battage du blé*). There is also *ḍirs ṭaḥūn*, a grinding tooth! Al-Maydānī reports *Akal min al-ḍirs*, "eating more avidly than a tooth".

so also do the teeth. But gently! For exhaustion undoes strength. Everything has its measure and limit. You don't complain of this tooth of yours—but do you also *not* complain of your stomach?"[454]

If he said: "I never tire of drinking water and I don't think anyone in the world drinks more water than I," he would say: "Earth must have water and soil must have water to wet it and irrigate it. Isn't the need (of it) in proportion to the abundance and scarcity of it? *Wallāhi*, should you drink (all) the water in the Euphrates, from what I see of your keenness for eating and the size of the mouthfuls you (take) I wouldn't think it beyond your capacity. Do you realize what you are doing? You're, *wallāhi*, drooling. You cannot see yourself but ask someone who will tell you the truth about yourself, so that you may realize that (all) the water in the Tigris would be insufficient to (satisfy) what is in your belly!" If he said: "Today I haven't drunk any water at all and yesterday I didn't drink as much as half a pint (*riṭl*). No man on Earth drinks less water than I do," he would say: "That's because you leave no room for drinking water and because you store a treasure in you alongside which water can find no way of entering. The wonder is you don't suffer from indigestion, because a person who doesn't drink water at table doesn't realize how much he has eaten, and anyone who goes beyond a suffiency in the amount (he eats) deserves to suffer from indigestion."

If he said: "I don't sleep the whole night long and lack of sleep is the death of me!" he would reply: "Will an over-full stomach, flatulence and stomach rumblings allow you to sleep? *Wallāhi*, were it nothing but thirst alone which keeps folk awake you wouldn't sleep. One who drinks much passes water often—how can sleep overcome one who spends the whole night drinking and making water?" If he said: "I no sooner lay down my head than I lie just like a stone till dawn," he would say: "That's because food intoxicates, stupefies and confuses,[455] floods brain and vein and the entire body becomes relaxed by it. Rightly speaking you ought to sleep night *and* day."

If he said: "I have begun to have no appetite in the mornings," he would say: "Avoid eating a little or a lot. Eating a little with no appetite does more harm than
106 eating a lot with an appetite (for it). The table / said: 'Take pity on me because of one who says: "I don't want (anything)." ' Furthermore, how could you have any appetite left today when yesterday you ate enough food for ten?"

Often would he say to his drinking companions: "Avoid eating when you have a hangover, since the cure for a hangover is drink. A hangover is indigestion and a person suffering from indigestion, if he eats, will inevitably perish. Avoid indulgence (in food) following cupping, bleeding and the hot bath. You should take care to eat sparingly throughout the summer, especially avoiding meat."

454. Modern Iraqi sayings are: "Toothache is foundation of death and shortens life", *Waj' al-asnān asas al-mawt wa-yuqaṣṣir al-'umr; Idhā sinn-ak yuwajji'-ak baṭn-ak yuwajji'-ak*, "If your tooth pains you your stomach will pain you!"

455. Arabic—*yuskir/yusakkir wa-yukhaddir wa-yukhattir*. By flooding the brain al-Jāḥiẓ apparently means that it makes the brain limp, unable to act.

He used to say: "People simply become depraved through one another. The very fellow who farts, talks in an annoying way[456] and tells improper stories, should he not hit upon anyone to laugh at him, anyone to appreciate him and laugh in response to him, nor anyone nothing else in his mind but to show amusement at him; surely nobody would fart or bother with (unseemly) jokes. Indeed people saying of the hearty eater and greedy glutton: 'So-and-so is a good trencherman,' is what was the death of him, so sharpening his ravenous (appetite) that he made a profession of it, till sometimes, because of the existence of this saying of theirs, their putting him forward and amazement (at him), he would eat what he was unable to stomach, so it would kill him. Yet he would go on intruding upon folk, eating their provender and leaving them without provision. But were they to say instead of 'So-and-so is a good trencherman', 'Of (all people) So-and-so is the most revolting eater', it would be to their benefit and his!"

The man mean over food goes on inviting the fat glutton and preparing nice meals in order to divert gossip from himself and give the lie to those suspicions about himself. If a powerful tooth were reckoned among the saintly virtues and a quality for which the possessor of it is commended at social gatherings, the prophets would certainly have been the greatest in creation and Allah, mighty is His name, would have singled them out by a capaciousness of belly He bestowed on no one else in the Universe! But how can this be when it is handed down in Tradition: "The believer eats (enough to fill) one stomach while the hypocrite eats (enough) for seven stomachs."[457] Haven't we seen them disparage greediness, gluttony and over-eating but commend abstinence and a scant diet? Did not the Prophet say: "To whom shall I show the lovely slim girl?"[458] A man once bandied insults with Ayyūb b. Sulaymān b 'Abd al-Malik,[459] in the course of which he said: "Your mother died of an unquenchable thirst and your father of a surfeit!"

Furthermore—have you ever heard of anyone who boasted of his father's mighty capacity as a trencherman with such words as: "I am the son of the mightiest
107 trencherman of the Arabs." On the contrary we see *nabīdh* drinkers and gallant lads (*fityān*)[460] boast of heavy drinking as, in the same vein, they boast of taking sparingly of food. And say the Arabs, in the words of the poet:[461]

456. *Kalām bārid* nowadays is said to mean *kalām fārigh*, empty words. In Egypt it means rather "irritating, boring, annoying". One says also *damm-uh bārid*, lit., his blood is cold "Confound the person who tells stories and lies to make people laugh" is quoted.

457. The Tradition is related in al-Wāqidī, *al-Maghāzī*, III, 101, when the Prophet had produced for him to eat only some dates kneaded together with ghee and dry cheese!

458. In reply to a man who told the Prophet that he had married, the latter said: "Bravo, you've married a slim young virgin!"

459. Ayyūb's father, the Umayyad Caliph Sulaymān, had nominated him as his successor. Ayyūb pre-deceased Sulaymān so the story is apocryphal, but he is said to have been a glutton.

460. See note 258.

461. The verses on the following page of al-A'shā of Bāhilah, in elegy of his brother, run consecutively. Often quoted, there are some variants as between narrators.

If chance bring him a piece of liver from the roast,
It suffices, from a small cup a sip at most.

He said:

Tarry he will not, to seek what lies in the pot,
Cleaning a bone, afore the tribe, you see him not.

He said:

He brushes not a leg because (fallen) weary or sick,
Nor suffers he the *ṣafar*-worm's rib-biting prick!

On a certain occasion he drank *nabīdh* while a singer sang to him, and overcome by an access of emotion, he tore open his gown, calling to a client of his called al-Mahlūl, beside him: "You too, confound you, tear your gown open!" Now this Mahlūl was a card—*he* said: "No, *wallāhi*, I shan't tear it open for it is the only one I have." "Tear it open", said Tammām, "and tomorrow I'll give you another." "Then I'll tear it open tomorrow," he replied. "What good is your tearing it open tomorrow to me?" said Tammām. "And by tearing it open now what can *I* hope to get?" said he.

Never did I hear of any man bargaining and debating over the precise instant at which, overcome by an access of emotion, he should tear open his gown, but Tammām and his client Mahlūl!

108

Various Tales

'Alī the blind man came in to visit Yūsuf b. Kulli Khayr, the latter having already had his midday meal, so he said: "Girl, bring Abu 'l-Ḥasan[462] lunch." "We've nothing left," she replied. "Bring, confound you, what there was," said he, "for there's no reason to be embarrassed by Abu 'l-Ḥasan." 'Alī was not in doubt of being brought a round of bread with some smears (of gravy) on it or a thin sheet of bread with a few traces of gravy on it, some sweet ripe dates, a little broth left over, a bone (to pick), a scrap of meat left over and the remains of what was left in bowls and dishes. However, she brought him a palm-leaf tray upon which there was nothing but a dry round of rice bread with nothing else with it. So when they set the table before him and he let his hand wander over it, he being blind, and he came on nothing but this round of bread, he realized that his words: "There is no reason to be embarrassed by him" were only because it was so little. But he didn't think it would to go such a length, so when he found nothing else he said: "Not as little as this, confound you! You've disclaimed any embarrassment but was all that talk only about this?"[463]

462. Yūsuf is using 'Alī's *kunyah*, Father of Ḥasan, in a familiar way.

463. In colloquial Iraqi Arabic today, "*kull hādhā marrah wāhidah*", means "how little there is" (Wadi'ah Najm). Egyptian "*Ay da kull-uh*," "Very little!" Or Iraqis might say: "*Hādhā mā bī (bihi) marrah*!" Wadi'ah Najm renders the last sentence as. "Damn it! You've done away with all formalities, but was all the fuss you made only about this trifle?"

Muḥammad b. Ḥassān al-Aswad told me, saying: "Zakariyyā the cotton merchant told me a tale, saying: 'Al-Ghazzāl (the cotton spinner) had a plot of land in front of my shop, half of which he let to a fisherman who deducted from him whatever he could of the cost of the letting.' "

He went on: "Al-Ghazzāl was a marvel for meanness. He used to leave his home with a round of bread in his sleeve, and mostly he would eat it without a relish. When this way of doing things bored him he would get a *juwāfah*-fish from his tenant for a *ḥabbah*[464] and in his account-book he would enter a *fals* against it. Then when he wanted to have his midday meal he took the *juwāfah* and rubbed it on the surface of the round of bread then bit into it. Sometimes he split the *juwāfah* open and rubbed both sides of it (with the bread), rubbing piece after piece of the bread against it. Then, when he was afraid he would use it all up and its belly would be drawn in, he would ask that fisherman for some fish salt and stuff its belly with it so as to distend it, to give the idea this was salt of its own with which it had been cured. Sometimes, indeed, his appetite would get the better of him and he would nibble the tip of its nose and take from the edge of the tip of the nose enough to taste his piece of bread and make it more palatable. He would act in this only over the last piece (of bread) (rubbed against it) so as to leave the fragrance of it in his mouth. He would then lay it aside and when he bought yarn from a woman he would include this *juwāfah*-fish in the price of the yarn by way of barter, reckoning it as a *fals* against her account. In this way he would try to recover the capital and profit by the relish over and above."

109 My friends relate as from ʿAbdullāh b. al-Muqaffaʿ[465] who said: "Ibn Judham al-Shabbī used to sit beside me and sometimes he would come with me to the house and take the midday meal with us, staying till it grew cooler. I knew him for extreme meanness allied to his great wealth. He kept on importuning me to visit him but I consistently declined his invitation. So he said: 'May I be your ransom, with respect, do you think I am one of those persons who puts himself about (for a visitor) and you are just saving me (the trouble)? No, *wallāhi*, it will only be some dry crusts, salt and water from the jar.' So I supposed he was trying to induce me (to come) by making light of the thing to him, and I said (to myself): 'It's like a man saying: "You bring us a crust to eat" or "Hand the beggar five dates to eat", the intention being many times more than the literal sense (of the) words.' I had no idea that anyone would invite the like of me (to come) to al-Khuraybah from al-Bāṭinah[466] and then offer him a few crusts and some salt.

"Now when I went to his house and he (actually) set these down in front of me,

464. The *ḥabbah* or *fals* is a quarter of a *qīrāṭ* and one forty-eighth of a dirham. See note 117.

465. The celebrated author of a version of a collection of animal fables originally composed in Sanskrit, *Kalīlah wa-Dimnah*, the *Fables of Bidpai*, an important early prose writer of the first half of the 2nd/8th century.

466. See note 140, the main part of the town. Al-Khuraybah was a fortified area of the Persians, destroyed by the Arabs under al-Muthannā, hence called al-Khuraybah, the Ruin. It was settled by the Muslims and formed two of the seven towns (*daskarah*) of which Basrah was composed.

along came a beggar standing by the door and saying: 'Give me some of what you're eating, may Allah give you to eat of the food of Paradise.' 'Blessings[467] be upon you,' he replied. So he repeated what he had said, and he made him the same reply. Once again, the beggar spoke to him so he said: 'Off with you, confound you, they've already refused you.' 'Allah forfend,' said the beggar. 'Never have I seen the like of what I've seen today—a fellow refusing a bite with a meal set front of him!'[468] 'Off with you, confound you, or else I'll come out to you, *wallāhi*, and beat your legs for you!' Said the beggar: 'Allah forfend, Allah prohibits a beggar to be rebuked[469] and you're going to beat his legs!' To the beggar I said: 'Be off with you, and save your breath—for if you knew, as I do, that his threat is genuine, you wouldn't stay the twinkling of an eye after his refusal of you!' "

Abū Ya'qūb al-Dhaqanān (?)[470] used to say: "Since I came into money I've never
110 been without meat." It was / his habit when Friday came to buy beef for a dirham. He also bought a *dānaq*'s[471]-worth of onions, a *dānaq*'s-worth of aubergines, a marrow costing a *dānaq* and when carrots were in season, a *dānaq*'s-worth of carrots—and he cooked the lot into a *sikbāj*-stew. That day he and his family ate their bread with a little from the top of the stewpot with the bits of onion, aubergine, carrot, marrow, fat and meat that had broken up in the pot. When Saturday came they would shred their bread into the broth of it. When Sunday came they would eat the onions. When Monday came they would eat the carrots. When Tuesday came they would eat the marrow. When Wednesday came they would eat the aubergines. And when Thursday came they would eat the meat. This was how he would say: "Since I came into possession of money I've never been without meat!"

My friends said: "We camped with people, inhabitants of al-Jazīrah. They were in a cold district there and their firewood was of the worst sort, for the whole countryside was one forest of tamarisk. We remarked: 'Nothing on Earth is more prolific than tamarisk.' 'It is prolific,' they replied, 'but it is a sort of proliferation from which we take flight.' " They went on: "So we said: 'From what is it that you take flight?' To which they replied: 'Tamarisk smoke[472] cuts down food and our children are many.' "

For certain things people find fault with the folk of al-Māziḥ and al-Mudaybir,[473] one of these being that their sweet biscuit (*kushknān*)[474] and its filling containing walnuts and sweet dates, is made of coarse-ground *khushkār* flour. Al-Māziḥ folk are not reputed for meanness but they are people living in the most wretched

467. This is the polite formula for refusing a beggar.
468. Cf. the Tradition in al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *'Itq*, 15, "Give them to eat of what you are eating."
469. Qur'ān, xciii, 10.
470. The name is uncertain—it could be understood as "The Two Beards".
471. At this period the *dānaq* appears to have been one-sixth of a dirham.
472. The dwarf tamarisk grows almost everywhere.
473. Two places near al-Raqqah in the Jazīrah province, occupied by the Qays and Asad tribes.
474. See Appendix 44.

condition, so they provide according to their living conditions.[475] I tell only of miserly persons who combine miserliness with affluence, fertile country and living like the inhabitants of droughty barren lands. As for a person who keeps a tight rein on himself because he is acquainted only with straitened circumstances, he does not come into *cette galère*.

Al-Makkī said: "My father had an uncle on his father's side called Sulaymān al-Kathrī (Muchmore), so called because he owned much property. When I was a little boy, until I grew up, he used to make a lot of me, but despite all these attentions he never gave me anything at all. In this he went beyond the bounds of avarice! One day I went in to see him and there in front of him lay some pieces of cinnamon not worth a *qīrāṭ*[476] When he had finished with what he wanted with them I stretched out my hand to take a piece and when he looked at me I withdrew my hand and he said: 'Don't draw back, but relax and be at ease and have good expectations, for your standing with me is as you would wish it to be. Take it, all of it—it is yours, lock, stock and barrel—it's all yours. I have a generous
111 spirit. / Allah knows I am delighted at any good fortune that comes your way!' I left it in front of him, rose from beside him and set my face, just as I was, towards Iraq. Up to the time he died I did not see him (again) nor he me." Al-Makkī said: "Sulaymān heard me when I was reciting Imru'u 'l-Qays's verses:[477]

To pasture we drive many of the goats of our stock,
Stick-like stand out horns of the old beasts of the flock.
Our tent they fill amply with both dried curds and ghee.
Hunger and thirst sated wealth enow is for thee.

"At which he remarked: 'If only he had mentioned some clothes with this it would have been splendid!' "

He it was who said to Yaḥyā b. Khālid[478] when he quarried into Abū Qubays to add to his house: "You have taken yourself to the Shaykh of the Mountains and shaken him up and made a breach in him!"

On being reproached for laughing so little and frowning so much he replied: "What stops me from laughing is that when a man laughs and is cheerful he is as near as can be to spending."

Maḥfūẓ al-Naqqāsh (the Painter)[479] accompanied me at night from the Friday Mosque and as we drew close to his house, his house being nearer the Friday Mosque than mine, he invited me to spend the night with him, saying: "Where

475. Cf. Qur'ān, xli, 9, "He provided in it (the Earth) the food of it."

476. See note 464 *supra*.

477. In his *Dīwān* the first hemistich commences: "*Alā in lā taku ibl-un fa-mi'za*", "Ho, if there be not camels let it be goats". *Aqiṭ*, in Hadramawt *qithi*, cheese in small hair pellets strung on a cord.

478. The Barmecide, vizier to the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd, a writer and orator, at one time of great wealth and power. He was disgraced by al-Rashīd so died in captivity. Abu Qubays is the mountain of Mecca.

479. Or engraver?

are you off to in all this rain and cold? My house is your house,[480] and you would be in darkness with no fire while I have biestings[481] the equal of which folk have never seen, dates of an excellence good enough for you, which could go only with them (the biestings)." So I turned off with him. He dallied a little then brought me a bowl of biestings and a palm-basket tray of dates but when I stretched out my hand (to take some) he said: "O Abū 'Uthmān, it's biestings and the clottedness of them, night with its (oppressive) closeness—a night of rain and damp moreover. You are a man already advanced in years, constantly complaining of paralysis of your side and a burning thirst always quickly overtakes you. You do not as a rule have an evening meal. If you eat the biestings without taking much, you will neither be eating nor abstaining and you will have upset your (usual) routine—then you will have stopped eating, however desirable it is to you. If you do eat well, I shall spend an uncomfortable night worrying about you, for I have neither *nabīdh* nor honey to hand for you. I merely make this remark so that you won't say tomorrow 'It was and it was . . .' *Wallāhi*, I have fallen between a lion's fangs—for if I don't bring you them when I've told
112 you about them you'll say: 'He was grudging with them, having second thoughts about them.' On the other hand, if I do bring them without warning you against them or reminding you of all you are taking upon yourself, you'll say 'He had no pity on me and offered me no advice.' Now I have entirely absolved myself of both responsibilities to you, so if you want—eat and die—and if you want—a little restraint and a sound sleep!"

Never did I laugh so much as I did that night. I scoffed the lot with no digestive other than laughter, liveliness and hilarity—as I suppose. Had there been someone with me to appreciate the nicety of his logic, laughter would have finished me off or done for me outright but laughter of a man on his own is but half what it is with friends to share in it.

Abu 'l-Qamāqim[482] said: "The first (principle) of thrift (*iṣlāḥ*) is that whatever of yours comes into my hands is not to be returned, for if what comes into my hands is mine, it belongs to me. If it does not belong to me, I have a better right to it than one who caused it to come into my hands. For anyone who puts something out of his hand into the hand of another, with no need to do so, has thereby made it free to the one to whom he has passed it. Your disposing of it is like making it free (to someone else)."

Once a woman said to him: "O Abu 'l-Qamāqim, confound you, I've married

480. i.e. you are welcome, make yourself at home.

481. Biestings—the first milk after an animal has brought forth young. It is thick like cream and in Egypt and Aden is boiled and added to other milk. Abū Hubal al-Bagdādī, *Mukhtārāt* i, 25, says: "It cools the stomach and liver and harms the nerves. It quickly gives off fumes in the stomach and taking overmuch of it harms through colic and stones in the kidneys but eating it with honey/honeycomb (*shuhd*) makes it all right." This explains Maḥfūẓ's concern for his guest!

482. He is Abu 'l-Qamāqim b. Baḥr al-Saqqā', the Water-carrier: he no doubt took his nickname from the water jugs (*qamāqim*) of his trade.

a day-time husband[483] and it's time now and I'm not in a fit state to be seen. (Go and) buy me, for this round of bread, some oil of myrtle[484] and, for this copper (*fals*) some (skin) oil, and you will receive your reward (from Allah). And perhaps Allah will cast some love for me into his heart so that, through this favour of yours, he will provide for me something to live on, for *wallāhi*, I'm in a sorry state and I have come to the end (of things). So he took both and went his way. Some days later she saw him and said: "Allah forbid, had you no pity on me in what you did to me?" "Confound you," he answered. "The copper, *wallāhi*, slipped out of my hand, and in my worry over it I ate the bread."[485]

He courted a certain woman and kept on pursuing her and weeping in front of her till she took pity on him. Now she was well off and he poor, so he asked her to give him a *harīsah*-paste of meat and flour, adding: "You're very expert at it." Some days later he pestered her for sheep's heads, then after a while he asked her for *ḥaysah*-date-cake. Again after that he pestered her for a *ṭafayshaylah*-ragout.[486] Said the woman: "Men's love I've seen located in the heart, the liver, the bowels, but your love doesn't get beyond your stomach!"

113 Abu 'l-Aṣbagh said: "Abu 'l-Qamāqim kept pestering a tribe with whom he had contracted a betrothal, asking about the woman's property, reckoning it up and putting questions about it (to them). 'We have informed you about her property,' they said, 'but you—what property have you got?' 'What's all the querying about my property?' he replied. 'What she has is enough for us both!' "

I heard one of the al-Ubullah shaykhs aver that the needy folk of Basrah are superior to the needy folk of al-Ubullah. "In what respect do you consider them superior?" I asked. To which he made reply: "They have a greater respect for the rich and are more conscious of duty."

It happened that two al-Ubullah men fell to words and one let his fellow Ubullan hear some coarse speech, to which the latter replied in kind. I noticed (the Ubullans) strongly disapproved of this, for no reason that I could see. So I said: "Why do you disapprove of his replying to his fellow in kind?" "Because", they said, "he's got more money than he has and if we allow him to do this we'll be allowing our poor folk to get upsides with the wealthy among us and this will be utter ruin."

483. This term suggests some kind of irregular liaison, but such little evidence as there is provides hardly any information about it. It would almost certainly be limited to women of low social standing, probably prostitutes. Al-Jāḥiẓ himself (*al-Ḥayawān*, v, 467) tells us that al-Makkī (see Appendix 27) fell in love with a *jāriyah*, a (black?) slave woman and married her in a day (*nahāriyyah*) marriage. The *Kitāb al-Aghānī* reports that a Basran man who had "married" one of these *nahāriyyāt* met with her in a house where the blind poet Bashshār b. Burd (first half of the 2nd/8th century) was also consorting with a woman in another room.

484. The perfumiers (*'aṭṭārūn*) used to manufacture oil of myrtle by adding ground myrtle to olive oil. It was used by women for their hair.

485. Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iẓ wa-'l-i'tibār*, trans. Bouriant and Casanova, i/iii, 67, notes the round (*qurs*) of bread used in transactions in Baghdad.

486. See Appendix 33.

Ḥamdān b. Ṣabāḥ said: "How comes it that Riyāḥ tells me off, but I can't tell him off? Is it because he is better off than I am?" Then he fell silent.

He said: "A visitor from the Basrah folk would be staying at ease with an Ubullan, and when the tide came up (the Tigris) they (the Ubullans) would say: 'We've never seen such a high tide as this. How pleasant it is to travel with the tide. It is much pleasanter than travelling with the ebb to al-Ubullah.'[487] They would go on to him in this way until he would think the best idea was to take advantage of that very tide."

Aḥmad b. al-Khārakī[488] was a miser and boastful of what he did not possess to boot—which is the most irritating thing there is. He used to arrange four buttons for each *jubbah*-coat[489] so as to show folk that he was wearing two *jubbahs*. He used to buy date-stalk bunches and bunches stripped of the date sprigs and palm-fronds from al-Kallā'[490] market and when the porter brought them to his door he left him a while to make folk think that he owned lands from which all of this might possibly have come. He used to hire wine merchants' vats for *nabīdh*, then try to select the largest of them and make himself scarce from the porters with the hiring, so that
114 they would shout at the door: "They drink *dādhī*[491] and wine of date-juice but keep the porters waiting for their hire!" While all the time he hadn't a pint of date-syrup (*dibs*) in the house. He heard the poet's verses:[492]

I see that, to you, bread so precious is
You reckon it amid the clouds of the skies.
'Tis not to defend us that you fan us,
But the loss to it which you fear from flies.

He said: "Why, Allah curse him, did he defend them? *Wallāhi*, I know only that he prepared tasty food and clean bowls for them, left them to it—entertaining them with food and drink. Then why didn't he let them fall into their bowls and land on their eyes and noses? *Wallāhi*, he could have done more than this. How many a time do you think I ordered the serving girl to throw a fly or even three into the bowl so that at least one of them might experience a feeling of disgust and Allah would save us from his evil (eye)."[493]

487. Of the Fayḍ estuary of Basrah, Le Strange, *Lands*, 43, says: "The tide from the Persian Gulf came up it . . . filling and emptying the numerous canals of Basrah." The Nahr al-Ubullah canal connected Basrah with Ubullah and the Gulf.

488. Aḥmad b. Isḥāq al-Khārak from probably Khārak island in the Persian Gulf (Lorimer, *Gazetteer*, II a, 1019), a minor poet of the time of the Caliph al-Ma'mūn.

489. See note 402. The sense here is unclear to me.

490. The *'idhq* is the whole bunch of dates, of which the *'arjun* is the lower part that holds the sprigs of dates. Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, vii, 1774 speaks of a man of the date-sellers (*tammārūn*) of the people of Kallā' of al-Basrah in 255/869. Grain was also dealt in there.

491. See Appendix 30. The Qur'ān, xvi, 67, allows *sakar* to be made from dates and grapes, but this verse is held to have been revealed before wine was forbidden and it is now abrogated. It is also said to be *nabīdh*.

492. Abū Shamaqmaq. See p. 64 and note 293.

493. In Bethlehem etc. people say: "*Yakfī-nā sharr al-ashrār*", "May (Allah) protect us from the evil of the evil-doers". The sense is that we have had misfortune enough so may Allah enable us to dispense with any more. It is used to repel imprecations from one, also the Jinn etc.

He said: "With regard to his saying: 'To you I see that bread so precious is'" (he went on), "If I do not hold dear this thing which is the staff of life to the denizens of Earth, their staple food and prince of comestibles what then am I to hold dear? Yea, *wallāhi*, I hold it dear, dear, dear, dear, as long as I draw breath and my eyes contain fluid!"

He reached the height withal in his boasting of what he didn't have, in what Ibrāhīm b. Hāni'[494] told me of him, saying: "I was at his house one day when some huckster passed by him, crying: 'Plums, plums' and I said: 'Plums have come in then?' To which he replied: 'Yes they have, and I have bought a lot of them.' 'What thing', he said 'is cheaper than six for one?' "

115 My anger at this induced me to call the seller over and I turned to Aḥmad b. al-Khārakī and said, 'You miserable wretch, we haven't heard of them yet and you have bought a lot when you know that our friends are fonder of good living than you.' Then I turned to the seller and said, 'How much are plums selling for?' He replied, 'Six for a dirham.' I said to Aḥmad, 'You expect me to believe you are one of those people who would buy six plums for a dirham, when you know very well that in a few days' time you will be able to buy two hundred for the same price! Then you say "I have bought a lot of them," while the seller here is offering six for a dirham.' 'What thing,' he retorted, 'is cheaper than six items for one item?' "

Ṣāliḥ b. 'Affān's lad used to ask him for naphtha for the donkey stable at night, and every night he would give him three *fals*. The *ṭassūj* is four *fals*. He would say: "A *ṭassūj* is too much and a *ḥabbah* too little, so the archer aims between the two." To his son he would say: "You give the bath owner and the ferryman each a *ṭassūj*, but if he sees you only have three *fals* with you he won't turn you away."

Abū Ka'b said: "Mūsā b. Janāḥ invited a group of his neighbours to break the fast with him in Ramaḍān and I was among them. When we had prayed the sunset prayer and Ibn Janāḥ had performed,[495] he turned to us and said: 'Do not be in a hurry, for haste is from Satan. But how shouldn't we hurry, when Allah, Mighty is His name, has said: "Man is hasty", and "Man was created of haste"[496]—so listen to what I have to say, for in the things I have to say lies convivial eating, avoidance of taking the choicest morsels for oneself, a well-directed outcome and a goodly way of living: when one of you puts out his hand for water and asks for a drink, when you have set before you a *bhaṭṭa*-broth[497] of rice and meat or a shredded bread *judhabah*,[498] or a savoury dough *'aṣīdah* or something that slips down the throat without water to help it down and doesn't need chewing, a dish eaten with one hand not two,[499] no bother to those eating with one hand, being something that

494. The little known of Ibn Hāni' is that he was a buffoon, dissolute, given to joking and contrary.

495. According to 'Awāmirī–Jārim, performed a natural function, which is customary at this time.

496. Qur'ān, xvii, 11, and xxi, 38.

497. For the *bhaṭṭa* see Appendix 45.

498. *A Baghdad Cookery Book* 47–8, lists no less than eight types of *judhab*, mostly containing almonds or other nuts, some with poppy-seed.

499. i.e. not flesh dishes.

disappears quickly—hold you back so that your companion can (eat). Otherwise you will put him in a dilemma, one possibility being that you will cut him short of that drink (he would like to finish) if he realizes he will not finish (drinking) before you finish (eating); another is that you will vex him and he will find it necessary to keep up with you and perhaps he may hastily swallow a hot mouthful and die under your very eyes. The least of the matter is that you may excite greediness in him causing him to take over-large mouthfuls. It was for this reason that when the desert Arab was asked: "Why do you begin by eating the meat on top of the *tharīd* (shredded bread)?" he answered: "Because the meat is about to depart but the shredded bread stays."[500] But *I*, even if the meal is provided by me, behave in this way. So if you see my actions contradict my words you owe me no obedience.' "

116 Abū Ka'b said: "Sometimes one of us would forget and put out his hand to the bowl when his fellow had put out his hand to the water. So Mūsā would say to him: 'Your hand, you forgetful man! Were it not for a certain consideration[501] I would call you "You pretender not to notice what you're doing!" ' "

He said: "He brought us a dish of rice of which, had anyone wanted to count the grains he could have done so because they were so few and far apart." He went on: "They had sprinkled a suspicion of date-syrup over it, about as much as half a small cupful. That night, while I sat beside him, a piece (of meat?) chanced to fall to my mouth and he heard the sound as I chewed it, so clapping his hand on my side, he said: 'Grind (it), Abū Ka'b, grind (it).' 'Confound you,' I said, 'have you no shame before Allah? How can I grind up "a part which is indivisible?" ' "[502]

117 ## *The Tale of Ibn al-'Uqadī*

Ibn al-'Uqadī used often to try to induce his friends to visit the (palm) garden but I didn't think him the kind of person whose spirit would bear with this under any circumstance. So one day I enquired of a guest of his whom I asked: "Tell me what happens to you." "Will you keep secret (what I have to say)?" said he. "Yes," I replied, "as long as I remain in Basrah."

"He buys rice in the husk for us", he said, "and brings it along with him—and of all Allah has created he has nothing else with him but that rice. And when we get to his land he makes his field worker husk it in a dehusking mill[503] he has—then he

500. The desert Arab is employing a word applied to the departure of tribal camel howdahs carrying away his beloved at which he is overcome by emotion—a common poetic allusion.

501. 'Awāmirī–Jārim suggest this means "were it not for good manners I would call you".

502. A philosophical allusion—the concept of *waḥdah mā lā tanqasim*.

503. Modern Iraqi *majrashah*. See 'Abbūd al-Karkhī, *Diwan*, Baghdad, n.d. (pre-1939) has a celebrated colloquial poem entitled *al-Majrashah*. "Fulanain" (S.A. Hedgecock and his wife), *Haji Rikkan*, London, 1927, 82, quotes: "Thou art like a *majrashah*, never silent", and "the hum of a *majrashah* husking rice".

winnows it—then he sifts it—then he husks the grains (spilled over) from it that have missed being husked. Once he's done with buying and transporting—then husking—then winnowing—then turning (it) over and sifting—then husking the grains (spilled over)[504] that have missed being husked—then winnowing them—then turning them over and sifting them—he gets the field worker to grind the rice with his own ox and his own mill. When he's finished grinding it he gets him to boil water for it and gather firewood for it. Then he has him knead it because, when (kneaded) with hot water, rice rises more. Then he gets the field worker to bake it.

"But, before all this, came his getting the (field workers) to set hooks[505] for fish for him and dam up the pools lest the smaller fish escape into the irrigation channels, so they can put their hands in to guddle in the holes of the *shalābī* and the white gar-fish (*rummān*).[506] And if we do catch any fish he puts it to roast under the girdle[507] on top of the fire for baking the bread, so that not much firewood will be needed. From early morning to night we are kept toiling away, hungry and waiting—then our supper is nothing but black bread of rice with *shalābī* fish—and—were he able to do anything (meaner) than that he would do it!"

I said to him: "Why doesn't he make a part of the wet soft marsh ground of his land into paddy fields[508] and sow rice for you—then the choice will lie in his hands—if he wants to offer you a meal quickly he can feed you on *fard* (a single dish/a sort of rice/an indivisible substance (philos.))—or, if he wants to take his time, he could indeed feed you upon *jawharī* (the best kind of rice/what is related to an indivisible substance (philos.))!"[509] "*Wallāhi*," he said, "were he to hear of this and get to know of it he would certainly adopt it. Allah, Allah. Allah[510] have

504. *Wāsh*, whole grains of rice that escape the husking.

505. *Shiṣṣ*, Persian *shast*, hook; the method used is described by Shākir Muṣṭafā Sālim, *al-Chibāyish*, Baghdad, 1970, 388.

506. *Daryāchah*, pool, a Persian word. The geographer al-Mandisī, 131, refers to the *shalānī*, read *shalābī* and *ramāyin*, as Tigris fishes. J.G. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf*, I, II, 2313, refers to Abū Ramān.

Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī's informant in his note describes the *ḥaḍrah*, fish trap or weir of the Gulf but this is not what is meant by the *daryāchah*.

507. The *tābaq*, a Persian word, is a flat metal girdle. Cf. Fulanain, *Ḥaji Rikkan*, 219, *Khubz tabug*, bread cooked on this girdle.

508. *Al-Chibāyish*, 298, states that rice is grown on the banks (*shawāṭī*, *sic*) of rivers or large irrigation channels (*tura'*). Rice and sorghum (*dhurah*) require about 120 days from sowing to harvest and the water management requires the construction of temporary clay dams. Ibn al-'Uqadī's guests' apprehensions would seem to arise from the idea that he might press them into this labour.

509. *Jawharī*, according to Lane, *Lexicon*, 47 is the best kind of rice. Cf. A.M.A. Maktari, *Water Rights and Irrigation Practices in Lahj*, Cambridge, 1971, 158, *jawharat al-arḍ*, part of the soil in a field considered the best. *Fard*, in the context, looks like a local technical name for a kind of rice, but I have found no evidence for this. Dozy, *Supplément*, 250 gives *fard ruzz*, a large sack of rice, but here *fard* would seem to indicate a quick-growing rice. Al-Jāḥiẓ is playing on the two senses of the words *fard* and *jawhar*, one agricultural, the other philosophical. For the latter see Appendix 46.

510. *Allāh, Allāh fi-nā*, a common expression still used. The sense given here is taken from a modern Egyptian writer.

pity on us. We're humble folk and had we the means we wouldn't put up with this infliction!"

118 *A Miscellany of Eccentricities*

Al-Makkī told me in these words: "I spent the night at Ismā'īl b. Ghazwān's house, but he took me in for the night only when aware that I had already dined with Muways and I had brought a skin of *nabīdh* with me. So when the better part of the night had passed and I was overcome by drowsiness, I made the carpet my bed and my arm my pillow,[511] for in the house there was nothing else but a prayer carpet of his, a cushion and a pillow. He took the pillow and tossed it over to me, but I declined to take it and gave it back to him—he refused it and I refused it. Then he said: 'Allah forfend! Can it be that you should use your elbow as a pillow while I have the extra comfort of a (proper) pillow?' So I took it and placed it under my cheek, but my finding the place strange and the hardness of my couch prevented me from sleeping. He thought I had gone to sleep and, bit by bit, up he came until he filched the pillow from under my head. When I saw he had gone off with it I laughed and said: 'You didn't need to give it me!' 'I only came to adjust (it to) your head,' he replied. 'I didn't say a word to you until you had gone off with it,' I said. 'It was with this intention that I came,' he said, 'but when the pillow came into my hand I forgot for what I had come. *Nabīdh* wine—as far as I can tell—*wallāhi*, entirely takes away one's memory.' "

Al-Ḥizāmī, al-Makkī and al-'Arūḍī told me in these words: "We heard Ismā'īl say: 'Do they not concur that, as a whole, misers are more intelligent than men of liberality as a whole? Here we are with you, a company some among us being whom people claim to be generous and some whom people claim to be miserly. Consider—which of the two factions is more intelligent? Here am I, Sahl b. Hārūn, Khāqān b. Ṣubayḥ, Ja'far b. Sa'īd, al-Ḥizāmī, al-'Aruḍī and Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuraymī. Have you anyone with you apart from Abū Isḥāq?' "[512]

Al-Makkī told me, saying: "One day I said to Ismā'īl: 'I've never seen a person who spent some of his money on folk and who, when he needed them, made him a return in kind.' He replied: 'Were what they[513] were doing pleasing to Allah
119 and / in conformity with what is right, Allah would not have gathered together deceit and meanness toward them from the ends of the earth, and had this expenditure been on what it should have been spent, Allah, Mighty is His name, would not have chosen from all His creation to afflict them.' "

Tammām b. Abī Nu'aym told me, saying: "We had a neighbour who had a

511. *Mirfaq* means elbow or pillow.

512. Abū Isḥāq might be al-Makkī or Ibrāhīm al-Naẓẓām, probably the latter.

513. i.e. those who spend their money ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

wedding. So he made the whole meal for it of almond jellied sweets of *fālūdhaq*.[514] 'The expense (must be) heavy,' they said to him—to which he replied: 'I put up with the heavy cost so as to bring relief more quickly.[515] Allah curse women! I am in no doubt that anyone who falls in with their (wishes) is worse than they are!' "

Now for a story I heard once upon a time. They say a certain man had attained the utmost height of miserliness and become an Imam.[516] When a dirham came to his hand he would address it, speak confidentially to it, say to it: "May I be your ransom" and tell it that it had been long in coming to him. Among what he would say to it was: "How many a country have you traversed, from how many a purse have you parted, how many a lowly man have you raised, how many a man of high degree have you abased? With me you will not be exposed or suffer the heat of the sun."[517] Then he would drop it into his purse, saying to it the while: "Stay, in the name of Allah, in a place where you will not be humiliated, despised or disturbed."[518] Nor did he ever put a dirham into it then bring it out again.

(They say too) that for (some) longing his household[519] would press him and were frequently at him to spend a dirham but he would resist them as far as possible. Then he lifted up a dirham only and, while on his way,[520] he saw a snake-charmer let a viper loose over his person so as to gain a dirham. So he said to himself: "Am I to waste on a meal or as drink a thing for which a person's (life) is risked? *Wallāhi*, this is none other than an admonition to me from Allah!" Then he went back to his household and replaced the dirham in his purse. His household was in great distress because of him and used to wish he would die and through (his) death to be rid (of him) and for life (without him).

When he did die and they thought they had obtained relief from him, along came his son and took over his property and his house. Then he said; "What did my father use as a relish? Most ruination comes only through seasoning." "He would use as a seasoning a piece of cheese (he kept) in his room," they replied. "Show it me!" said he. And there in it was a groove like an irrigation ditch as a
120 result of rubbing a piece of bread along it. / "What is this excavation?" he asked. "He would never cut the cheese," they replied, "only rub along the surface of it, so it got dug into, as you see." "That's done for me," he said, "through this he's put me in the position I am now. Had I known that, I wouldn't have said the

514. For *fālūdhaq/pālūdah* see Appendix 47.

515. Relief from his womenfolk's nagging him to spend!

516. Imam, a leader in prayer, but here probably in the sense of *qudwah*, an example.

517. The Ḥaḍramī abroad says to the coin he saves, as he hides it away: "You won't see the sun till you're in Ḥaḍramawt." Ismā'īl al-Akwa', *al-Amthāl al-Yamaniyyah*, Beirut 1405/1984, II, 487, cites verses on the dirham exalting and humbling.

518. Cf. Qur'ān, xx, 117–18, describing Paradise to Adam: "Thou wilt not be hungry therein, nor naked and thou shalt not be thirsty therein or be exposed to the sun."

519. By "household" his wife may be intended. By "desire" the modern spoken Iraqi Arabic can mean "a desired dish or kind of food not found very often" (Wadī'ah Najm).

520. To buy something.

blessing[521] (over his bier)." "And you—how do you intend to do it?" they asked. "I shall put it some distance away", he said, "and point the piece of bread at it."

This latter genre has no appeal for me since there is no limit to hyperbole. I tell only of what there was among folk[522] or such as may possibly be among them or (their) argument or manner of behaving.

Ibn Juhānah al-Thaqafiyyah[523] said: "I marvel at anyone who withholds *nabīdh* from a person asking for it since *nabīdh* is in demand only upon a day of bleeding or cupping, or a day a visitor comes, or a day of eating fresh fish,[524] or a day of taking an aperient. I have not seen anyone looking for it when he has *nabīdh* in his house, either to lay it down, make a corner in it, sell it or collect it. It is a thing good to ask for, good to give and good when it comes one's way: and it is essentially abundant and cheap. So what is the point in withholding it? Nobody, in my opinion, would withhold it but a person without an atom of the traits of the generous. Yet I have no apprehension of any reduction in my (supplies) of *nabīdh* through what I give of it. For when I withdraw from my drinking companions my *nabīdh* returns to me as it was, in the same measure of it as I dispensed—and I shall have gained a reputation for open-handedness through a thing that has occasioned me no loss. Any person neglecting to win a reputation for open-handedness through something that does not involve him in loss is so much further from winning a reputation for open-handedness through what does involve him in loss."

Ibn Juhānah spoke of the generosity of his in giving his *nabīdh* but he did not refer (to the meanness) to his discredit in shutting out his drinking companions.

Al-Aṣma'ī[525] or someone else said: "A Midyanī[526] induced one of the folk to (buy) a hack and he tethered it at the manger. Waking from his sleep he discovered it munching fodder. Then he fell asleep again and woke to find it still munching and shouted to his lad: 'You mother's son,[527] sell it or give it away or give it back or slaughter it. I sleep but it doesn't[528] (it's doing away) with the best of my money. It just wants to destroy me root (and branch).' "

Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Madā'inī said: "There was a date-merchant at al-Madā'in[529]
121 whose serving lad would appear embarrassed when he entered the shop / and

521. The Prophet would not bless a dead man still owing a debt. The son considers his father in a similar category. For pointing the bread at the cheese compare Appendix 48.

522. i.e. the misers (Awāmirī–Jārim).

523. This individual is described as the son of his mother, not of his father.

524. It is averred that cold fresh fish is hard to digest.

525. See note 572.

526. Perhaps a man from Midyan, a town between al-Dīwāniyyah and Samāwā.

527. An insulting form of address.

528. Or perhaps interrogative—"Do I sleep but it doesn't?"

529. Al-Mada'in (the Cities), seven leagues below Baghdad on both banks of the Tigris, the ruins of the twin capitals Ctesiphon and Seleucia. In the 4th/10th century it was a small but populous town.

would stammer[530] at times, so he suspected him of eating the dry dates. One day he questioned him but he denied it. So he called for a wisp of white cotton and said: 'Chew it.' The lad chewed it and when he put it out (the merchant) found sweetness and yellowness on it. 'This', he said, 'is your habit every day without my being aware of of it. Get out of my house!' "

By us there was a man of Banū Asad—when the fieldworker's son climbed a palm-tree of his to pick ripe dates for him he filled his mouth with water. For this they made fun of him, saying: "He swallows it and eats some while on the palm and when he wants to come down he pisses in his hand and holds it in his mouth." Ripe dates are much too easy to come by for field labourers' boys and those whose fathers are not field labourers for anyone to resort to half of so disgusting a trick as this or even some of it. He continued: "After this he would fill his mouth with water (coloured) yellow, red or green so that he would be unable to do any such thing at the tops of the palm-trees."

Al-Miṣrī, neighbour to al-Dārdarīshī (?)[531] whose money is beyond all reckoning, told me, saying: "One day when I was at his house he drove a beggar away harshly, then another stopped by him and he drove him away also, but with anger and fury." He went on: "So I turned to him and said: 'How do you hate beggars!' 'Yes,' he replied, 'most of them that you see are better off than I am.' He went on: "So I said: 'I don't think you hate them just because of that.' He replied: 'All these, could they but get my house into their power, would demolish it, and my life (into their hands), would take it from me. Were I to comply with them and give them all they ask of me, I should long ago have become as they are. How much do you think I must hate those who wish to see me in this plight?'

"His brother was his partner with him in everything and like him in miserliness. One Friday his brother set before us a palm-basket of ripe dates, worth at Basrah a couple of *dānaqs*, we being at his door. While we were eating, along came his brother but he neither greeted or spoke to us before entering the house. We found that strange, as he used to put up an excessive show of affability, making affability a defence for his money, for he realized that if he combined parsimony with pride he would be murdered."

He went on: "We didn't know his reason for it and neither did his brother. When, also, the next Friday came his brother called for a palm-basket of ripe dates and while we were eating he came out of the house without greeting (us) or stopping. We found this odd but we had no idea what was the matter with him.[532] When the third Friday came and he saw the same thing happen he wrote to his
122 brother: 'Dear Brother, the partnership / between us took place when there were not many children but as (they are now) many, differences come about. I cannot

530. Or "be delayed".

531. An obscure name.

532. Iraqi colloquial today, *shinū quṣṭah*, lit. what was his story, (classical Arabic *mā qiṣṣatu-hu*); Lebanese is similar. In Egypt a traditional saying is that a man with pride (*kibr*) will die of loneliness.

be sure that your sons and mine may not come to some unseemly pass. Property there is in my name, half of which is yours; property in your name, half of which is mine, gold and silver in my house and the same in your house, without our knowing the surplus of part of that over the other. Should Allah's command come to us by night, war between these youths will set in and noisy squabbling among these womenfolk will go on for a long time. So the best idea is for us to go ahead this very day with severing this connection from them.'

"When his brother read his letter this (appeared to him) a matter of great seriousness and appalled him. He turned the idea over in his mind from top to bottom, but turning it over only added to his lack of understanding (it). So he brought his sons together and spoke severely to them and said: 'Maybe one of you has made a slip with just one word, or may be this calamity results from offences given by the womenfolk?' Once he had ascertained the innocence of (his) people's court, he walked over to him on foot, bare-footed and said: 'What motive have you (to ask for) dividing and differentiation (of our property)? Call in the upright men[533] of the mosque folk this very moment so that I can have them witness that I am an agent to you in these estates. Transfer everything in my house to your house. Try me out over this immediately and if you discover me devious and prevaricating—get on with it![534] What I want at once is for you to tell me what offence I have committed.' 'You have committed no offence', he replied, 'but division there must be!' He stayed with him till midday imploring him. Then he stayed that day of his till midnight imploring and entreating him.

"When he wearied of the affair and had done his utmost with him, he said to him: 'Tell me about your setting out palm-baskets of ripe dates, your spreading palm-mats in the streets, providing cool water and gathering people by my door every Friday. It is as if you supposed me blind to this act of generosity. If you give them *barnī*-dates[535] to eat today, you will tomorrow be giving them *sukkar*-dates and the day after tomorrow *hilbāthā*-dates. Eventually, after Fridays, that will turn into the rest of the days of the week. Then ripe dates will turn into the midday meal. Then the midday meal will lead to the evening meal. Then it will become clothing, then kids, then lambs, then making banquets. *Wallāhi*, truly I mourn for the treasuries and the land revenue of the empire through this, and how much (the harder it will be) with a merchant's money that he has put together from *ḥabbahs*, *qīrāṭs*, *dānaqs*,[536] quarters and halves?' 'With respect (may I be your ransom),' he answered, 'do you want me never to eat a ripe date again, over and above everything else? Another thing—no, let me, *wallāhi*, never speak to them again!' 'Have a care,'

533. Ar. *ṣalīḥ* (*ṣulaḥā'*), most likely in the sense of "peacemakers, conciliators", as today among the Nakha'īs.

534. i.e. with the division of the property.

535. *Barnī* (Persian arabicized), *sukkar*, a sweet date, both of first quality. *Hilbāth*(*ā*) (Aramaic?), was the only kind of date brought to the Sultan from Basrah (*Lisan*, II, 198).

536. See notes 117, 128, 410, 464, 471.

he said, 'not to make a mistake twice—first (in) arousing their greedy expectations of you, second by incurring their enmity. Extricate yourself from this business in the way you entered into it.[537] Declare yourself rid of it and you will be safe.'[538]

123 Abu 'l-Hudhayl had presented Muways with a chicken. His chicken he had given Muways was of a quality inferior to that which was ordinarily prepared for Muways but because of his generosity (of heart) and congenial character he made a show of admiring its plumpness and tender flesh, though knowing him for exceeding parsimony. (Abu 'l-Hudhayl) would say: "And how, Abū 'Imrān,[539] did you find that chicken?" To which (Muways) would reply: "Absolutely marvellous!" Then he would go on: "And do you know what breed it was—do you know how old it was? A chicken's tenderness depends on its breed and youth. Do you know what we used to fatten it on? Do you know where we used to feed it?" He would carry on in this vein while the other was laughing at him with a laughter which we realized, but not Abu 'l-Hudhayl!"

Abu 'l-Hudhayl was the best-hearted of men, the easiest in disposition, of an extreme simplicity. If they happened to mention a chicken he would say: "How did it compare, Abū 'Imrān, with *that* chicken?" If they spoke of a duck, a yearling kid, a slaughter-camel or a cow he would say: "How did that camel compare among slaughter-camels with *that* chicken among chickens?" If Abu 'l-Hudhayl spoke appreciatively of some plumpness in birds or beasts he would say: "No, *wallāhi*, not (so plump) as *that* chicken!" If they spoke of the sweetness of fat he would say: "Sweetness of fat is found in cattle, ducks, fish bellies and chickens, especially in *that* breed of chicken." If they spoke of the birth of anything or the arrival of a man he would say: "That was a year after I gave it you," and "There was only one day between So-and-so's arrival and the despatch of that chicken (to you)." It became an object of comparison for everything and a date for everything.

On one occasion he turned to Muḥammad b. al-Jahm[540] when I and our friends were at his house and said: "I am an open-handed man who can't save a thing. These hands of mine are adept at earning but stupid at spending.[541] How many a hundred thousand dirhams do you think I have distributed among (my) fellows at one sitting? Abū 'Uthmān[542] is well aware of this. I ask you, please (by Allah), Abū 'Uthmān, are(n't) you aware of that?" "I have no doubt," I said, "Abu 'l-Hudhayl,

537. i.e., gradually, by degrees.

538. Cf. the phrase used by the Prophet: "*Aslim taslam*", "Accept Islam and you will be safe", to which this may be a rather ironic reference.

539. i.e. Muways. Al-Karkhī, *Diwān*, 83, was entertained by a shaykh who killed a chicken for him but began to expatiate on its superb quality, so he composed a poem making fun of the shaykh and his chicken.

540. Muḥammad b. al-Jahm al-Barmakī, perhaps called the Barmecide because brought up under their aegis. He was associated with the Caliph al-Ma'mūn who appointed him to several governorships. He was a scholar interested in the Greek sciences. He is described as a close-fisted hard miser.

541. This is a proverbial saying quoted by al-Maydānī.

542. Al-Jāḥiẓ.

of what you are saying." But he was not satisfied with my being present (as he uttered) these words until he had asked me to testify (to them), nor was he satisfied with asking me to testify (to them) until he had asked me to swear (to them).

124 ## *The Tale of Abū Sa'īd al-Madā'inī*

Abū Sa'īd was an imam in avarice with us at Basrah, being one of the large contractors of *'īnah*[543] deals and one of the affluent of them. He was, furthermore, highly intelligent, extremely eloquent, quick in repartee, thinking well ahead.

I used to wonder at the interpretation given by our (circle) to the bedouin Arab saying about the meanness of the mean man who sucks. Our fellows say: "Every mean individual is avaricious, but not every avaricious person is mean, because the adjective 'mean' (*la'īm*) applies to avarice, ingratitude, contemptibility of an individual and the existence of a streak in that individual predisposing him to it." Abū Zayd[544] said: "He is *la'īm* and *mal'am*." Now *la'īm* is what I have explained, while a *mal'am* is one who gives justification for a mean (*la'īm*) individual. As for the mean man who sucks, he is one who does not milk into a vessel but sucks at the teat,[545] fearing some of the milk may be lost. Thawb b. Shaḥmah al-'Anbarī[546] said of his wife who belonged to Hamdān:

The story, you told me, of a teat-sucking woman who
Puts aside the milking vessel to drink at the front teat.

The *qādimān* are the two front teats. When he heard this of her he divorced her. When he discovered her they said to him: "Avarice (*bukhl*) dishonours a man[547] only. Whenever did you hear of a woman lampooned for avarice?" "That is not what I mind," he replied, "but I fear she should bear me sons like her."

Rāfi' b. Huraym[548] said:

(Lacuna) . . . you milk sitting,
At times sucking the teat though your bowl is to hand.[549]

543. See note 391. Abū Sa'īd was an associate of Khālid b. Yazīd al-Mukaddī (the Mendicant) but not particularly notable.

544. See note 313, Abu 'l-Zayd al-Anṣārī.

545. The poet Jarīr, seeing a shaykh of small stature tether-a goat and drink its milk, asks how such a man can vie with Banū Dārim (*Naqa'iḍ*, ii, 1047).

546. A noble lord of the pre-Islamic age, a contemporary of Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī who took him prisoner. He is called "Protector of the Birds" which were not hunted in his territory. Hamdān, the famous Yemeni tribal confederation, own mainly sheep and goats.

547. Islamic Tradition considers "the best characteristics of women are the worst characteristics of men's—haughtiness, cowardice and meanness (*bukhl*)!" If she is a *bakhīlah* she saves her money and that of her lord! The others defend her virtue.

548. A pre-Islamic poet, a Yarbu'ī, of whom and whose verse hardly anything is known.

549. The verse seems to be a lampoon of a person unknown.

invoking Allah against him to make him an owner of sheep, not an owner of camels and that he suck from the teat though he has a milking vessel with him. A bedouin Arab sometimes swears an oath against his fellow, saying: "If you are a liar may you sit down to milk," i.e., may Allah give you in exchange for the nobility (and generosity) of camels the (ignobility and) meanness of sheep.

125 How can we be astonished at the meanness of a man who sucks the teat when Abū Saʿīd al-Madā'inī committed a far greater enormity than that? He dipped (his bread) in a jar of vinegar (by way of a seasoning), it standing until it was finished without his taking a little or a lot out of it.

He had a circle in which sit the dealers in *ʿīnah* contracts and the misers who discuss thrift (*iṣlāḥ*) with one another. They heard that Abū Saʿīd would hie himself to al-Khuraybah every day to dun a man there for five dirhams outstanding to his account. "This", they said, "is a great mistake and very wasteful. Prudence dictates that one should be strict but without thereby incurring loss, but this colleague of ours has brought all kinds of trouble on himself."

So they gathered round him in a body to address themselves to him and ascertain from him (why), saying: "We observe you doing something which we cannot fathom. An error by you is of far greater significance than one by somebody else. This affair confuses us so tell us about it because our minds are troubled by it. Acquaint us with the reason for your going to al-Khuraybah to dun (someone) for five dirhams. For one thing, we cannot be sure you will not suffer from physical debility, much of your life having passed, and that you will not fall sick, so that you have to leave off dunning for large (sums) because of dunning for small ones. Another is that you become as weary as this and inevitably must make a larger evening meal if you are among those who dine at evening, or dine at evening if you are among those who do not. This, if all put together, will come to far more than five dirhams. Then, too, you will be obliged to pass through the middle of the market wearing your (good) clothes and a laden camel will come at you and there will be jostling from here, tugging from there and see, the gown[550] is ruined! Besides that your sandals will become holed and thin, the legs of your trousers dirty and worn. Perhaps you may slip in your sandals and so cut them badly, perhaps tear them apart. Consequently, dunning for a small sum has brought you to this pass without your getting anything out of it. You are a superior person. We should just like you to disclose something of the matter, for it is not all of us who are sure you are correct in everything."

Abū Saʿīd replied: "With regard to what you say about physical debility what (actually) I am more afraid of for my body is ease and lack of movement. I haven't seen any with healthier bodies than porters and peddlers.[551] Folk, if they die before
126 me, did not have this as a habit. Don't people say '*Wallāhi*, So-and-so is truly healthier than revenue collectors' runners', meaning the trotting of the runners to

550. Modern *dishdāshah*?

551. In some parts of Iraq Jewish peddlars were called *ṭawwāf*.

and fro? Sometimes I stay at home for part of the business but I keep going upstairs and down, for fear of too little movement. With regard to preoccupation with what is at a distance, to neglect of what lies near at hand, I do not turn aside to what lies at a distance until I finish with what is near at hand. Regarding that to which you refer over the matter of extra food, my inner self knows for certain, and my heart is confident, that my inner self receives from me only what is due it, and that if it calls me to account on the days I am weary, I shall call it to account on the days of rest. It will, thereat, realize the distinction between the days (I go to) al-Khuraybah and the days on which (I go to) Thaqīf.[552] With regard to the encountering of the laden camel which you have mentioned, the crowding of the market folk and the jostling and tugging, I cross the central area of the market before the market folk get up to perform their prayer, then I return skirting along the fringe of the market. With regard to what you say about sandals and trousers, from the time I go out of my house till I am close to the door of my debtor[553] I have my sandals in my hand and my trousers in my sleeve. When I come to him I put them on and when I have departed from his house I take them off, and that day they are more comfortable about the waist and nicer. Now is there still anything left you of what you said?" "No," they replied. "Well," said he, "here is a point that meets all you have raised." "What is it?" they asked. "If," said he, "a man whose house is close by and who owes me a thousand dinars, learns how severely I dun a man whose house lies some distance away and who owes me only a few coppers, he will bring me what he owes me without allowing himself to entertain designs on my money. In addition to the return of my money, this policy brings with it long relaxation for my body. Then I have the choice of leaving off resting to devote (my time) to any business any way I like. Yet another point is that this small (sum), were it not left over from a large one and tied to a well-known debt owed me, I might possibly give up my claim on it. But to drop something that will raise covetous expectations regarding the rest of my debtors' debts outstanding—this is not permissible at all." They rose, saying as one man: "No, *wallāhi*, don't let us ask you about (any other) problem."

Aḥmad al-Makkī, brother to Muḥammad al-Makkī, he being connected with Abū Saʿīd through *ʿīnah* deals and money making—and because of Abū Saʿīd's eccentricities and conversation—told me.

Ahmad said: "On one occasion I said to him: '*Wallāhi*, you're well off indeed and certainly acquainted with matters of which I am ignorant. Yet your gown is filthy—so why don't you order it to be washed?' To which he answered: 'Had I but little money and were I ignorant of matters with which you are acquainted, how would you have addressed me? I have mulled over this for six months and the right way to cope with it is still unclear to me.

552. The quarter in which members of the Thaqīf tribe had settled?

553. Lit. my friend (*ṣaḥibī*). Men of a certain standing are depicted with wide voluminous sleeves. See for example illus. no. 6.

127 " 'One moment I say: "When a garment is dirty it eats into the waist of the shirt as rust eats into iron, and a garment which, in succession, is soaked by sweat, dries, filth accumulating on it, sticking to it, has its warp eaten away and thread rots—this beside its foul smell and disgusting appearance. Furthermore, I am a man who goes to his debtors' doors and the debtors' menservants are bullies. So what do you expect they will do when they see me in foul rags and filthy tatters, in a state of mourning?[554] They confront me with rough words on occasion and throw me out on another. This results in damage for me. It is part and parcel of thrift/(*iṣlāḥ*) that every thing tending to withhold it should be excluded from it. (This is to say nothing of) the loss of temper that intrudes and the unseemliness that someone in such a state encounters."

" 'When these thoughts coincide I have a mind to have them laundered, but when I do have this in mind I am confronted by a contrary notion that gives me reason to think it has come to me by way of prudence and through (common) sense. It says: "Item one is the loss there will be (from the cost of) water and soap, and when the serving girl does extra work she eats more. Soap is lime and lime eats into a garment and wears silk away and a garment goes on being exposed to danger until it is handed over to be bleached and beaten.[555] Then it is tossed onto the line where it is exposed to pulling, rubbing and hanging. On that day I must sit in the house and whenever I sit at home they throw open before me gates to all kinds of (domestic) expenses and to all kinds of appetites. Garments have to be beaten and if we beat them at home we'll tear them and if we hand them over to the dhobi it's loss upon loss—added to the possibility that he might bring something unseemly[556] into contact with them, which is even worse. Nor have I ever sat at home but debtors put out lying rumours about me, alleging of me (that I have been stricken by) illnesses or accidents. This gives them the opportunity for mischief-making, perversity[557] and cupidity they did not (normally) have. Then if I put them on again, white, nice (to look at), dry and comfortable, I thereupon notice my body's dirtiness and my long hair, for one was linked with the other and I treated them separately. What was not apparent to me is now (all too) evident and I pay attention to what I previously did not heed. This turns into an invitation to visit the bath that (involves) heavy loss coupled with risk to my clothes. Now, I have a pretty young wife who, when she sees I have (removed my hair) with lime-paste, washed my head and bleached my gown, confronts me by perfuming herself, wearing her prettiest clothes and laying herself open to me. Now I am a stallion—and the stallion's head cannot be restrained when he is excited, but when
128 I want to fall to with her and she sees my eagerness, she showers a rain of wants

554. Mourning involved abstention from the use of perfumes, dying the hands with henna, and wearing of old clothes.

555. To get rid of the dirt.

556. He fears they may be exposed to theft, mishandling or contact with unclean substances.

557. i.e. withholding repayment.

on me. Then we need to heat water.[558] Worse than all of this is that she become pregnant and require a wet nurse—so that we fall into what has no end to it." ' "

(This) and much else, some of which Aḥmad had forgotten, some of which I had.

This Abū Sa'īd, his avarice apart, was the most violent-tempered and arrogant of folk, going to the very limit in this. A case in point is that he went to a man of Thaqīf to dun him for a thousand dinars, the money having fallen due to him. He would frequently sit a long while with him, being present in his house when the midday meal arrived, and he would lunch with him, dunning him the while.

Now when he had tired of the long deferment of the repayment of the debt he said to him one day while sitting at his table: "This money has to have *zakāt*[559] paid on it. When I let this money out of my hands I knew it was liable to be lost, to protracted litigation, even to become an encumbrance upon the estate (of a debtor deceased). Moreover I assented to a low (rate of) interest[560] from you because of the expectation I entertained of prompt repayment on your part and but for that I would not have consented to this money (i.e. interest) or to lend you this money.

"This money—when the condition (under which it was lent) was that it be repaid a year later, but I granted you a month's or two months' stay of payment, by way of asking for repayment politely; then it would have stayed in my possession for a month or two, until I got someone like you (to borrow it)—has forfeited the interest (accruing to it) and the interest (on that too) has been lost to me. Persons like you do not need much (asking), but I have been dunning (you) and you have been pretending to ignore (this) for a long while." This speech he was delivering while the whole time he was not stopping eating.

So a man of Thaqīf turned to him and suggested to him that if he simply wanted to demand payment surely that ought to be done at the mosque, not in a place where he was present at the midday meal. He broke off eating, the blood rushed to his face and he looked at him like a raging man-slaying camel. Then he all but flew in fury. Then he addressed him and said: "May you have no mother! I dipped my bread in a jar of vinegar until it was finished through good understanding only. I like riches in the measure of my exceeding hatred of poverty. I hate poverty in the measure of my utter scorn of suffering humiliation. You would suggest to me, may you have no mother, that I want his midday meal. *Wallāhi*, I only ate with him so that he would feel shame through the sanctity of eating together and so that his liberality/honour would become a means to settle (my) business quickly."

558. For the ritual ablution.

559. Goods and cash have to be held in possession for a year before *zakāt* is liable to be paid on them. Yaḥyā b. Ādam, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, trans. A. Ben Shemesh, *Taxation in Islam*, Leiden, 1958, 103. "I heard 'Uthmān b. 'Affān saying: 'This is the month of your *zakāt*, so if anyone has a debt let him repay it, and give *zakāt* from your remaining properties.' " Probably Abu Sa'īd means that if his debtor does not repay him, the latter will be responsible for paying the *zakāt* on it.

560. The term used in *ribḥ*, profit, but it is in effect *ribā*, interest.

Then he rose with the bond bearing its clay seal and rubbed it on the wall till he broke it. Then he spat on the writing and rubbed one part of it against another. Then he tore it up and threw it away. Then he said to all those present in the reception room: "This a thousand dinars that Abū So-and-so owed me.
129 Witness / all, that I have received it from him and that he is discharged from everything for which I am dunning him." Then he rose.

When he did what he did the debtor turned to his friend and said: "Whatever led you to say those words? Why do you say them to this man at my table and venture to attack, in these words, a man with whom you don't know how things stand? What's more, I wanted, *wallāhi*, to put him off till I sell the (date) crop and we'd hoped (to do so) when the dates had ripened to the sweet stage.[561] But you've done him a good turn and us an ill turn, for you've hurried on the payment to him of his money. Go, boy, and sell this crop in the market. Sell it for what it'll fetch[562] so that he can receive his money in full." Then he rode over to him, but he refused to take it. Finally, when there had been much ado about the matter, he said, "I suppose what motivated your friend to say what he did is that he is an Arab and I am a client.[563] So if you make the mediators on your behalf of clients, I shall accept this money, but if you don't, I won't!" So the Thaqafī set to assembling every Shu'ūbī in Basrah till they petitioned him to take the money.

Abū Sa'īd would forbid his serving woman to put the sweepings[564] out of the house and he ordered her to collect them from the tenants' houses and throw them onto his sweepings and from time (to time) he sat and the serving woman came bringing a basket with her and singled out one basket of sweepings to lay in front of him, then she searched through one after another. If he got bits[565] of dirhams, a purse containing money for (household) expenses, a dinar, a piece of jewellery, the way to dispose of that was understood. As for any wool he found in (the basket), the way he dealt with it was that when collected together it was sold to the makers of padded saddle-cloths, as also pieces of (woollen) cloaks, while such rags of cloth as there were went to makers of trays/china-ware[566] and glass water-jars. Such pomegranate rinds as there were got sold to dyers and tanners. Any bottles there

561. And would fetch a better price.

562. Cf. Ḥaḍramī "*uḍrub buh al-sūq*", "sell it for what it will fetch".

563. The client class in Iraq was mainly non-Arabs and regarded by the Arabs as of inferior social status. Anti-Arab sentiment found expression among them in the Shu'ūbiyyah literary-cum-political movement which denied Arab superiority. For the Thaqafī to seek their help was extremely humiliating, but it looks as if for economic reasons he was forced to come to terms with Abū Sa'īd and if he had not done so perhaps he would not have been able to raise loans on further occasions.

564. A group of people who go round sifting the dust in the streets. They sling water bowls round their bodies and sprinkle the markets with water. They also go forth to the threshing floors and consume the siftings, that is, the remnant of grain left in the ears of corn after they have been trodden out.

565. Perhaps the pieces of dirhams cut up to make small change.

566. See note 404.

were were sold to dealers in glass. Any date-stones went to the dealers in poor quality dates.[567] Any plum-stones went to planters (of plums).[568] Any nails and scrap iron went to the blacksmiths. Any parchment scrolls went to the state textile factory[569] and small sheets of paper for covers for the tops of jars. Any pieces of wood went to the makers of donkey saddles. Any bits of bone went for fuel. Any pot-sherds went for new *tannūr* bread ovens.[570] Any rubble[571] was collected for building. Then (the rest) was stirred, turned over and combed in order that the small pieces (of rubbish) could be collected and set aside for the *tannūr* bread oven.
130 Any lumps of pitch were sold / to the retailers of pitch. Once just earth was left and he wanted to make bricks from it, either to sell or for his own requirements. He would not go to the expense of drawing water but ordered everyone in the house to perform the ritual ablution (before the prayer) and wash over this (earth) only. When it was wetted he converted it into bricks.

He would say: "Let no heed be taken of anyone who hasn't come to know what it is to economize as I know it."

Something belonging to a tenant of his went missing, the sort of thing stolen from houses. So he said to them: "Throw out dust tonight and maybe the person who has taken it will feel regret and drop it in the dust without his going to that place seeming out of the ordinary, because so many go there for the same (purpose)!" And so it happened—that the stolen article was dropped on the dust. They used to throw their sweepings onto his and he spied it before the person from whom it was stolen did. So from him he took the hire of the sweepings! This is the narrative of Abū Sa'īd.

131 *The Tale of al-Aṣma'ī*[572]

Some (tribes-) folk walked over to al-Aṣma'ī, accompanying a merchant who had purchased his (date) crop because of a loss[573] he had sustained, and the latter

567. *Ḥashaf*, the worst sort of date, or without stones, dry and bad. *Ḥushūf* should be read for *khushūf*.

568. Iraqis are said always to be planting plum-stones.

569. The Ṭirāz factories are discussed in my *Islamic Textiles*, Beirut, 1972. The scrolls (*qirṭās*) may have been used for cutting patterns—some in the Cairo Genizah have been cut into pattern shapes.

570. See note 106 on the *tannūr* for which the small pieces (of rubbish) are set aside to burn. Perhaps the potsherds were used for the infill in a bank of *tannūrs*.

571. *Ishkanaj* (?), modern Iraqi *ishqannaq/ishganag* mentioned by al-Karkhī and al-Ḥanafī.

572. Al-Aṣma'ī (d. *ca.* 213/528) was one of the most celebrated early philologists. He collected data from the Bedouin in the desert. From Basrah he went at one time to the court of Hārūn al-Rashīd in Baghdad, returning to Basrah after his death. He was also at one time associated with the Barmecides. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadī, *al-Bukhalā'*, 78, says he was a *bakhīl* who collected stories of misers.

573. Al-Karkhī, *Dīwān*, 208, indited a poem, *al-Tijārat al-khāsirah*, on a loss he sustained on a purchase of dates when the price dropped.

besought him for (his) kind reconsideration (of the deal) and for a reduction in the price. Al-Aṣma'ī replied: "Haven't you heard of the unjust division?[574] This, *wallāhi*, is what you are pressing your shaykh to do! He buys from me on the basis that the loss be borne by me while he has the profit. This, by your father, is the trading of Abū 'l-'Anbas.[575] Go and buy the grain of al-'Irāq at my expense in accordance with this stipulation. However, I don't know whether he is telling the truth or lying! Here's one (way out) and it's in your interest not in mine, but I must bear with you since you haven't borne with me. *Wallāhi*, you didn't walk over (to me) with him but you were (already) prejudging his case and deciding it necessary to support him. Had I been judging in his favour as you do I would have put him in a position to do without you. I do not recognize his (plea) and he has no rights against me. Come then, let us split this difference equally between us.[576] This is pretty fair treatment from a person who has assumed a liability for which he bears no responsibility in order to satisfy a person whose responsibility it is."

They rose and did not return and the merchant withdrew in his favour from his claim and despaired of (an adjustment) to what he owed him.

132

The Tale of Abū 'Uyaynah[577]

Ja'far, son of Wāṣil's[578] sister told me, saying: "I said to Abū 'Uyaynah: 'The man acted appositely who questioned his wife about the meat and she said: "The cat's eaten it"—so he weighed the cat and then said: "This is the meat but where is the cat?"'[579] 'You seem to be hinting at me,' he said." (Ja'far) continued, " '*Wallāhi*,' I said, 'you do qualify for that—a shaykh nearly a hundred, with a more than ample income, few dependants,[580] given monies for discussing the (religious) sciences, the (religious) sciences being his joy and profession. Then he goes up (to retire to) the middle[581] of his house. You are a man with one leg in the garden, another leg with the field workers planting palm shoots, another

574. A reference to Qur'ān, liii, 22, *tilka idhan qismah ḍīzā*.

575. Abu 'l-'Anbas: Muḥammad b. Isḥāq b. Abi 'l-'Anbas born in Kufah, qadi of al-Ṣarīmah/Ṣuraymah, a writer of comic tales and nonsense stories, who lived till the time of the Caliph al-Mu'tamad (d.263/877). No writing of his is extant.

576. He means the reduction the merchant wanted.

577. A person apparently unknown to the literature.

578. Wāṣil and Ja'far seem unknown also.

579. This doubtless ancient tale has survived, for instance, in a tale of Naṣr al-Dīn Khojah—see Appendix 49.

580. Maydānī quotes two proverbs on this theme: "*Al-'iyāl sūs al-māl*", "Children are the worms (eating at) money", and "*Qillat al-'iyāl aḥad al-yasārayn*", "Few children are one of the two reliefs". The two partners with you in your money are misfortunes and the heir.

581. 'Awāmirī–Jārim suggest that Abū 'Uyaynah withdraws to hide himself in his house so as not to be obliged to invite others to a meal.

leg in the market and another leg in al-Kallā'.[582] This man you ask for a load of gypsum, that one for a load of baked brick, from this a length of teak, from that one such and such. Why all this endeavour, why all this toil, why all this concern? Were you a young fellow with the prospect of a long future (before you) how would you be? Were you in debt, burdened with numerous dependants how would you be? Quite recently I've seen you wearing rags, walking at midday on foot.' "

He (Ja'far) continued: "How long am I to keep it bottled up inside me? It came to my ears that you missed a bit of melon and persisted in asking where it (had gone). 'The cat's eaten it,' they told you, so you threw the remaining bit down in front of the cat to test whether they were telling the truth or lying. When it didn't eat it you fined them the price of the whole melon. They said to you: 'It was night time and if it wasn't one of the neighbours' cats that ate it, it looks as if the one that ate it was this cat of ours. You threw it the bit when it had its fill of it. Give us a little time and we'll try it out under a different circumstance.' But you refused to do anything but fine them."

He (Abū 'Uyaynah) answered: "Confound you, *wallāhi*, I come to stop them doing wrong only by doing some wrong myself. Ziyād (b. Abī-hi) said in his (famous) speech:[583] '*Wallāhi*, I only arrive at getting the truth out of you when I engage deeply in lying to you.' First of all, with regard to what you criticized in me, I simply hold to his[584] saying: 'Were a palm-shoot in my hand and they said to me: "The Resurrection is coming this very moment", I should hasten to plant it.'[585] Abu 'l-Dardā', in his mortal illness, said: 'Marry me, for I should not like to
133 meet Allah in an unmarried state!'[586] The Arabs say: 'The man whose brain boils in summer, his stew-pot will boil in winter.' Makraz[587] said: 'Indolence is a soft couch upon which only a languid torpid man finds it nice to recline.' 'Abdullāh b. Wahb[588] said: 'Love of repose earns fatigue.' 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said: 'Beware of resting for it is a shackle.' He said also: 'Were patience and gratitude two riding camels I would not mind which I should ride.' He said: 'Don the garb of Ma'add[589] and lead a harsh life: cut the stirrups and mount the horse by vaulting.' He said

582. A suq of Basrah, perhaps at the sea.

583. Mu'āwiyah sent Ziyād as governor to Basrah where he delivered an address (*khuṭbah batrā'*) in which he did not say "Praise is Allah's" (some say he did) but he did not mention the Prophet. Ziyād suppressed the rampant disorder in the city. The speech is quoted in many sources including al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bayān* and Ṭabarī's history.

584. 'Awāmirī–Jārim suggest that "his" refers to the saying of some sage.

585. A saying heard in Ṣan'ā' is: "*Idha jā ak al-mawt wa-fī yadak shajarah fa-'ghris-hā*", "If death comes to you and you have a plant in your hand, plant it".

586. Muslims disapprove of a man remaining a bachelor. For Abu 'l-Dardā' see note 45.

587. Makraz/Mikraz b. Ḥafṣ al-Akhyaf, an ancient "knight".

588. 'Abdullāh b. Wahb al-Rāsibı of Azd, a man of courage and eloquence who was at the conquest of Iraq and fought for 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib at Ṣiffīn, but broke with him, was elected commander of the Khawārij and killed at Nahrawān in 38/658.

589. Ma'add, the tribes of northern Arabia.

to 'Amr b. Ma'dī Karib[590] when he complained to him of diarrhoea from pains after eating meat: 'You must take (to walking) in the heat of midday.' He said: 'Walk barefoot for you never know when it will be time to flee.'[591] He said: 'If work is a time of exertion, lack (of it) is a time of going to rot.' To Sa'īd b. Ḥātim he said: 'Beware of a life of ease as you would be beware of sin for, to my mind, of the two it is the more to be feared by you.' He said: 'I warn you of the consequences of lack of occupation for it is more apt to introduce disreputable things than work would do.' Aktham b. Ṣayfī[592] said: 'I do not care to be provided with every worldly thing.' 'But if you have plenty of ghee and milk?' they countered. To this he replied: 'Yes, I dislike the habit of indolence. Do you see me abandoning the injunctions of the prophets, the doctrine of the caliphs and the teaching of the Arabs and adopting your doctrine?' "

34

A Miscellany of Stories

Muḥammad b. al-Ash'ath[593] took the midday meal with Yaḥyā b. Khālid and they discussed olive oil and its superiority to ghee as well as the superiority of the oil of unripe olives[594] over unripe olives pickled in brine. Said Muḥammad: "I have an olive oil to which people have seen nothing comparable." Said Yaḥyā: "Can't some of it be produced?" So Muḥammad summoned his servant and said: "When you go into the store-room look for the fourth jar on your right as you go in and bring us some of it." Said Yaḥyā: "A noble who knows the exact place of his olive oil and olives does not win my admiration."

Asad b. 'Abdullāh's baker,[595] when he was governor of Khurāsān set before him a roast which he had overdone. Asad liked a tender roast so he said to his baker: "Do you think I don't know what you've done? You don't overdo it to make it tastier but you draw off all the fat on it and profit from it in this way." His brother heard of this and remarked: "Ignorance is often better than knowledge!"

A certain fellow was in the habit of coming at al-Jawharī's meal (times), choosing

590. See note 296.

591. The image seems to be drawn from the open pastures where a sudden raid on flocks may make flight imperative, but *iḥtafa* also means to clean the pasture of herbs, leaving nothing—this could also apply here.

592. Of the Usayyid clan, a branch of Tamīm, famous for the wise sayings attributed to him. He was known for his longevity but probably did not survive to the time of the Prophet.

593. The Mervian (al-Marwazī). Yaḥyā b. al-Khālid is the Barmecide (see note 288).

594. *Unfāq* (Greek *omphakion*), oil pressed from olives not quite ripe, said to be less hot than ripe olives. A Tradition says: "Take olive-oil and if you are afraid it will do you harm, add water to it and it will become like ghee" (Ibn al-Qutaybah, *Uyūn*, iii, 299).

595. Al-Qasrī, governor of Khurāsān in the time of the Umayyad Caliph Hishām where he kept down revolts. The 'Abbasid propaganda can be said only to have become effective there after his death.

his time unerringly. If he came in when folk were already eating and the table had been set down, he would say: "Allah curse believers in free will.[596] Who would be able to prevent me from eating this meal when it was already (written) on the Preserved Tablet[597] that I shall eat it?" When he had done that often, Riyāḥ said to him: "Come evening or morning and if you find anything curse the believers in free will and curse their fathers and their mothers!"

A serving lad came to Khālid b. Ṣafwān[598] with a basket tray of plums, either it would be as a present or else that his serving lad had brought it from the garden, and when he put it down in front of him he said: "Did I not know that you have already eaten I would have given you one to taste."

Ramaḍān said: "I was with an Ahwāz shaykh in a *ja'fariyyah* (Tigris skiff), I in the stern and he in the bow. When time came for the midday meal, from a basket
135 of his he produced a fowl and a single cold chicken / and set to eating and conversing without offering me (any) though there was no one in the boat but he and I. He saw me glance now at him, then at what lay in front of him. So he supposed that I was wanting some and asking to be given some of it and he said to me: 'Why do you stare so intently. One who has (food) with him eats like I do and one who hasn't anything with him looks on as you do.' " He continued: "Then he looked at me while I was looking at him and said: 'You fellow, I'm a man who eats well and eats only good food, but I am afraid you may have a greedy/malevolent eye[599] and the eye of one your sort is quick (to have an effect) so turn your face away from me.' " He continued: "So I sprang on him, and seized his beard with my left hand. Then I took the chicken with my right hand and went on beating his head with it until it broke up in my hand. Then he moved to my place (in the boat) and wiped his face and beard. Then he turned to me and said: 'I told you your eye was malevolent and that you would afflict me with the evil eye!' 'How does this resemble the evil eye?' I asked. 'The evil eye', said he, 'is something disagreeable that happens and your eye has brought down a mightily disagreeable thing on me!' I laughed in such a way as I had never laughed before and we fell into conversation until it seemed as if he hadn't said anything rude and I hadn't treated him outrageously."

These are gleanings from my friends' and my own stories and what we have seen with our own eyes.

596. The Qadariyyah doctrine.

597. The Tablet kept in Heaven on which the decisions of the divine will are written (see *EI*^{2}, v, 698).

598. An eminent Umayyad orator who died in the time of the first 'Abbasid Caliph al-Saffāḥ. He belonged to a Tamīmī family of Banū Minqar in Basrah. Oratory (*khiṭābah*) seems to have been a characteristic talent in the family. He is, however, said to have been one of the four most miserly Arabs!

599. Iraqis say: "*'Ayn-ak māliḥah*", "You are greedy, envious (*ḥasūd*)", as do Sa'udis. In Egypt they say: "*Ḥuṭṭ fi 'ayn-ak faṣṣ milḥ*", "Put a piece of salt in your eye" (don't be so greedy). In Sawākin, "*fulān 'ayn-uh ḥārrah*", "his eye is hot", means he has the evil eye.

As regards the stories about al-Aṣmaʿī, Abū ʿUbaydah[600] and Abu ʾl-Ḥasan[601] I found nothing in them appropriate to this context apart from what I have already penned in this book, namely some ten stories or more.

They said: "Al-Mughīrah b. ʿAbdullāh b. Abī ʿAqīl al-Thaqafī,[602] when governor of al-Kufah, would have a kid placed on his table after the meal, but no one would touch it, seeing he did not touch it. One day however, a Bedouin Arab, unaware of how our friends behaved about it, ventured to attack it and was not content with eating the meat on it but stripped its very bones of flesh. So al-Mughīrah said to him: 'You, fellow, are you trying to wreak blood vengeance on this kid's bones? Did its mother[603] butt you?' " Al-Aṣmaʿī used to say: "He merely said: 'You fellow, are you trying to wreak blood vengeance on this wretch's bones? Did its mother butt you?' "

36 He (al-Aṣmaʿī) said: "'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Ṭāriq was in command of his police and he said to one of the policemen: 'If you make an attack on the Amir's kid I'll excuse you a year's watch duty.' This came to his ears and he complained of him to al-Ḥajjāj so the latter dismissed him, appointing Ziyād b. Jarīr[604] in his place. He was more irksome to him than ʿAbd al-Raḥmān but he was unable to dismiss him since he had been appointed by al-Ḥajjāj. So when he delivered the address (at the Friday prayer) al-Mughīrah would say: 'People of Kufah, whoever seeks to vent his spite against you and traduces you to your Amir, may Allah curse him and curse his one-eyed mother.' Now Ziyād's mother had one eye and folk would say: 'We've never seen an allusion more felicitous than his.' "

They said: "Ziyād b. al-Ḥārithī[605] had a kid which he used not to touch nor did anyone else. During the month of Ramaḍān he gave the evening meal to some folk among whom was Ashʿath[606] who, alone of them, turned his attention to the kid.[607] 'Have the people in the prison an imam to lead them in the prayer?' asked Ziyād. 'No,' they replied. 'Then let Ashʿath lead them in the prayer,' he said. 'Or, Allah prosper the Amir, an alternative?' 'And what's that?' said Ziyād. 'I swear by the triple divorce that I shall never flesh of a kid again!' he answered."

600. Cf. note 253.

601. Al-Madāʾinī, cf. note 223.

602. He preceded the well-known Umayyad governor al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf.

603. Ibn Qutaybah, *Uyūn*, iii, 260, gives an even more sarcastic and insulting version: "By your father, you certainly are tender towards it. Did its mother suckle you?"

604. Al-Bajalī. Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, ii, 1191 mentions him as governor over the Ḥarb in Kufah, and that he had one eye.

605. Ziyād b. ʿUbaydillāh . . . al-Ḥārithī, maternal uncle of the Caliph al-Saffāḥ who made him governor of the Holy Cities, al-Ṭāʾif and al-Yamāmah, being deposed in 141/758–9.

606. Abu ʾl-ʿAlāʾ Ashʿath b. Jubayr, a client of ʿAbdullāh b. al-Zubayr, a Medinan, known for his witty tales, many of which are preserved and sang well. He had a good voice for reciting the Qurʾān. He was one of the best versed of his time in Muʿtazilī doctrines and a member of them. He remained in Baghdad till the time of the ʿAbbasid Caliph al-Mahdī then returned to Medina where he died. He was notorious for his cupidity (*ṭamaʿ*).

607. Ibn Qutaybah adds "after the table had been removed".

They said: "'Abd al-Malik b. Qays al-Dhi'bī invited one of the Sharifs[608] of Basrah (to dine), 'Abd al-Malik being mean with food but generous with money. The man brought with him a servant[609] to accompany him and when 'Abd al-Malik saw him he could not put up with him. So he turned to him and said: 'A thousand dirhams are more to your benefit than your being detained here with us'. He put up with the loss of a thousand dirhams but he could not put up with eating a round of bread."

A bedouin Arab took a chicken from in front of Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Mālik[610] who said to him: "What is in front of and next to you should be sufficient for you." "Is part of it an interdicted pasture?" asked the bedouin. "Take it then," said he, "and may Allah give you no luck of it!"

They said: "Mu'āwiyah was fond of tripe stuffed with rice and meat and one
137 day Ṣa'ṣa'ah b. Ṣawḥān / Ṣūḥān ate the midday meal with him and took what was in front of Mu'āwiyah. Said Mu'āwiyah: 'You *do* forage far afield.' To which Ṣa'ṣa'ah retorted: 'One who suffers from drought goes out a-foraging!' "

They said: "Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik, accompanied by his friends, went into a walled garden of his containing fruit, bushes and fruit trees. So they fell to eating and invoking blessings on him. 'Boy,' said Hishām, 'root these up and plant olive-trees in their place.' "

They said: "Al-Mughīrah b. 'Abdullāh b. Abī 'Aqīl was eating dates with his friends when the lamp went out. They were tossing the date-stones into a copper dish and he heard the sound of two date-stones. 'Who is this who is playing with two dice?' he said."

They said: "Ḥuwayṭib b. 'Abd al-'Uzzā sold a house to Mu'āwiyah for forty-five thousand dinars and they commented to him: 'You've become rich!' 'What's the use of forty-five thousand', he replied, 'when you have six children?' "

They said: "A man begged of Khālid b. Ṣafwān and he gave him a dirham but the beggar considered it too little, so he said: 'You stupid fellow, a dirham is a tenth of ten, ten is a tenth of a hundred, a hundred is a tenth of a thousand and a thousand is a tenth of ten thousand. Don't you see how a dirham mounts up to the blood-money of a Muslim?' "

They said: "Bilāl b. Abī Burdah, when he was governor of Basrah, was afraid of leprosy, and they prescribed for him bathing in ghee. When he had finished sitting
138 in it he ordered it to be sold so that year folk avoided / eating ghee. He used to entertain folk to breakfast (*faṭūr*) during the month of Ramaḍān and they used to sit in circles, the tables being set in front of them. Now when the *mu'adhdhin* rose (to say a shortened form of the call to prayer prior to the actual performance of the prayer) Bilāl rose for the prayer but the others were diffident (about starting before him), and when they rose for the prayer the bakers[611] came and removed the meal."

608. Or simply "the nobles".

609. *Shākir*, Persian *chākir*.

610. Umayyad Caliph (d. 99/717).

611. Lit. bakers, as bread is the most important item, but no doubt cooks are meant. There is a fuller version of this tale in Ibn Ibshihī *al-Mustaṭraf*.

They said: "'Umar b. Yazīd al-Asadī[612] used an enema that contained oils and when he had a bowel movement he objected to going to the privy and those oils going to waste. So he would sit over a copper pot and say: 'Strain this off—it'll be all right for the lamp.' "

They said: "A neighbour of his told us, remarking: 'I saw him picking his teeth for a month with the same toothpick.[613] Each time he ate the midday meal he clipped a bit off the top of it and then picked his teeth with it. Then he would replace it in the slot of his pen-case.' "

They said: "Dhirāʿ al-Dharrāʿ[614] was with Khālid b. Ṣafwān when they set a fowl before him, but he had only some olives in front of him so he began to eye the fowl. 'You seem to have a mind to it,' observed Khālid. 'Who's to stop me?' said he. 'In such case you and I would come to have an equal share in my property,' replied (Khālid)."

They said: "Abu 'l-Ashhab stretched his hand out to something in front of Numaylah b. Murrah al-Saʿdī and he said: 'When you've been allotted something specially to yourself don't go looking for something else.' "

They said: "He died owing eighty thousand dirhams to the flour-merchant alone on account of the large amount of corn he (consumed)."

They said: "Al-Ḥakam b. Ayyūb al-Thaqafī was one of al-Ḥajjāj's governors over Basrah and he made Jarīr b. Bayhas governor over al-ʿIrāq,[615] Jarīr's nickname being al-ʿAṭarraq.[616] Now al-Ḥakam went on a picnic while he was in al-Yamāmah and invited al-ʿAṭarraq to the midday meal with him. He ate with him and took
139 hold of a black partridge that was in front of him, / so he deposed him and appointed Nuwayrah al-Māzinī to replace him. Nuwayrah, who was paternal cousin to al-ʿAṭarraq, said:

On the high ridge (al-ʿIrq) was game, with which, were you content,
With Ḥakam's heath-cock to dispense, sufficient,
And gorging flesh of camels knackered for disease—
Should your meat-lust the flesh of slaughter-camels ease!
Drinking from skins full, cool-cov'red by *thumām* grass,
Of purest milk, causing craving for meat/milk to pass.

"When (al-Ḥakam) appointed Nuwayrah governor in his place, he heard the latter was paternal cousin to him and so deposed him. So Nuwayrah said:

612. The commandant of the police of al-Ḥajjāj, apparently from Kufah. He was a courageous general of the latter part of the Umayyad period.

613. The toothpick would be a sliver of palm-frond rather like a matchstick (called in Ḥaḍramawt *khūṣah*).

614. Dhirāʿ al-Dharrāʿ means Cubit the Measurer; but Dharrāʿ can also mean a stallion camel forcing the female down so he may cover her. A *double entendre* jest seems likely.

615. 'Awāmirī–Jārim read al-'Irq for al-'Irāq which they describe as a place in Basrah—though al-'Iraq seems unlikely, their only authority for the reading lies in the verse that follows.

616. 'Aṭarraq means "tall gangling in frame".

O Abū Yūsuf, did only you know my loyalty,
My faithfulness, you'd not have sold me for al-Muḥallaq.[617]
Nor would Ṣāliḥ, thief of chiefship have overwhelmed me,
Nor yet would I be charged with the crime of al-'Aṭarraq.

"And it became a proverb."

A certain man took an egg from in front of a governor we had, a stout man, and he said: "Take it, for it's the last egg the hen will lay."[618] After that he remained inaccessible till he died.

He went to an estate of his to spend his leisure there pleasantly, accompanied by five men of his retinue, bringing enough food for five hundred. It bothered him that they should eat with him, but he grew ravenous with hunger. So he sat by a vegetable bed[619] and fell to pulling up a long white radish, folding its leaves over the root, then eating, because of his avid hunger, without its being washed, saying to one of them sitting nearest to him: "If only those clods would go away we would eat."

They said: "'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Bakrah[620] ate at Mu'āwiyah's table and he
140 noticed 'Abd al-Raḥmān gobbling (his food). / When evening came and Abū Bakrah went to him he said: 'What's happened to your gluttonous son?' 'He's ill,' he replied. 'The likes of him will never want for an illness!' said Mu'āwiyah."

A bedouin Arab once at with Abu 'l-Aswad al-Du'alī[621] and he noticed that he ate in a disgusting gobbling fashion, and he was horrified at what he was doing and asked him: "What's your name?" "Luqmān[622] (Gobbler)," he replied. "Your family spoke truly," said Abu 'l-Aswad: "You are a Luqmān, a Gobbler!"

They said: "He had a shop with just enough room for him to sit in and in front of it lay a small palm-leaf tray. He made (the dais) of the shop rather high, without a step up to it so that no one would be able to come up (level with him)." They continued: "Now there was a certain bedouin Arab who would bide his time and come to him on his horse and become as if he were (on a level) with him at the shop. So he took a skin oil bottle,[623] put some pebbles in it and used it to recline

617. Al-Muḥallaq is said to have been a governor called al-Ḍabbī.

618. *Bayḍat al-'uqr*, the first or last egg of a hen, or the egg of a cock because it only lays once in its lifetime.

619. *Mashārah*, an Aramaic word (Ḥaḍramī *maṭīrah*).

620. Another Thaqafī of Basrah whom Ziyād b. Abī-hi made governor over some districts of Basrah (first century of the *hijrah*). Al-Balādhurī, iv A, 32 reports this story with variants. Mu'āwiyah himself was renowned as a mighty eater: he hated to have a greedy man at his table (*mā'idah* as opposed to *khiwān*, note 86). See *Kitāb al-Tarbī' wa-'l-tadwīr*.

621. See note 59 and *Dīwān* of Abu 'l-Aswad, 87–8 and especially 95.

622. *Tilqāmah* with the same root letters of *Luqmān*—hence the play on words, but Luqmān al-Ḥakīm, the Wise, is mentioned in the Qur'ān as one on whom Allah had bestowed wisdom. Ali-Ḥamdānı says he was a great eater and speaks of the many narratives about Luqmān b. 'Ād and al-Maydānī cites the proverb "A greater eater than Luqmān, a greater eater than an elephant".

623. A hard leather bottle made by stretching a skin on a sand mould and drying it in the sun.

upon. When he noticed the bedouin had approached he would make it look to him as if he were changing his reclining position, so that when the skin oil bottle rattled with the pebbles inside it, the mare shyed." They continued: "The bedouin went on drawing his mare up to him and he rattling at it until it shied with him and threw him. After that he would not come back to him again."

141

The Epistle of Abu 'l-ʿĀṣ b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Thaqafī[624] *to al-Thaqafī*

In the name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful

To follow (after greetings). Your sitting beside al-Aṣmaʿī, admiration for Sahl b. Hārūn, coming down on the side of Ismāʿīl' b. Ghazwān's (doctrine on *bukhl*), attack on Muways b. ʿImrān, association with Ibn Mushārik, comings and goings to Ibn al-Taw'am,[625] (coupled with) your constant talk of money and prudent management (*iṣlāḥ*) of it, managing and selecting it, expatiating upon how to make it attractive and marketable and promote growth in value, sound maintenance and saving, (all these) are an indication of some hidden ill (in you), evidence of (your) shame and retreat (from your previous attitude) where formerly you used to find their talk boring and their activities distasteful, where you would express astonishment at their way of thinking and be immoderate in your criticism of them. None but a person intent on amassing (money) would be so keen to talk of amassing (it)—none but a person averse to those spending generously would be on friendly terms with misers.

Your memorizing of the dicta of Sahl b. Hārūn on "being in readiness when in a state of truce, making sure that the most objectionable aspect of a moratorium lies in protracted (repayment), that the acme of prudence and most correct course of action is to rely on wealth to support one against disasters, that the surplus to maintaining the body be to buttress (one) against the ill turns of fate, that we cannot truly be credited with wisdom until we encompass the basis[626] of prosperity (in our grasp), that we should set a shield between us and and excess of well-being"—is testimony to your admiration for this way of thinking and proof of your tendency to follow in his path.

In your approval of al-Aṣmaʿī's narration that "most of the denizens of Hell-Fire are women and the needy,[627] that most of the denizens of the Garden (of Paradise) are the simple-minded and the rich, and the lords of great swards carry off the rewards" is proof of the accuracy of my views of you.

624. Member of a noble family of Basrah who flourished in the second century of the *hijrah*. His ancestor al-Ḥakam b. Abu 'l-ʿĀṣ was an early settler in Basrah in the time of the Caliph ʿUthmān.

625. Ibn al-Taw'am's retort to Abu 'l-ʿĀṣ in defence of the misers follows on p. 154.

626. i.e. money.

627. Because women squander money and the poor are poor because squandering has brought them to this pass.

142 (As also) in your esteem of Ibn Ghazwān's discourse when he said: "You take pleasure in nice food, fine clothing, delicate liquors, emotive singing—and I in the honour riches confer, proper regard to consequences, plenty of money, security from poor circumstance(s), the humiliation of humbling oneself to (other) men and inability to cater for the children's welfare. That is your delight and this is mine. This my idea in exonerating (myself) from criticism and that is your (*sic*) (their) idea in laying yourself open to approbation. Only a healthy man free of care can derive advantage from approbation and a man sound (in body) and of true sense perception can enjoy pleasures. But a needy man—how little does he require approbation and how much he does need the wherewithal to discover the taste of approbation. The food you selected reverts to dung, liquor becomes piss, a building reverts to rubble, singing is a wind blowing, abaser of manly honour, a folly leading to ruin, a tinkling that fades away. Your pleasure lies in what brings about you neediness and breaks down manly honour—whereas my pleasure lies in what brings riches about me and builds up manly honour. So I am busy building, whereas you are busy demolishing, I am engaged in twisting the cord, whereas you are engaged in untwisting (it), I am engaged in seeking enduring honour while missing some pleasure, whereas you are engaged in exposing yourselves to perpetual humiliation and loss of all manly honour."

I comprehend the purport of your narrative and what you are so eager to tell. What points to the breakdown of your character and your retreat (from your former attitude) is your commendation of the direct opposite of what you would formerly commend and your passion for what you always detested before. Off and away with it! Allah banishes (from his favour) only him who acts unjustly. The poet knew you well when he said:

Say, if you hear of a miser's demise:
This perisher far be it to pity.
To his heirs his estate is Paradise
When he dies; dust and worms have his body.

Another (poet) said:

In his grave rots his face once fair.
His properties his foes now share.

Praise to Allah who has not let me die without disclosing you to me as an agent
143 for your (own) property, a hired man to your heir./ For your part you've been in a hurry to anticipate poverty before its season and are become like a man punished with flogging without having taken his pleasure.[628] Does the state of a man who has spent all his money, seen adversity affect his family, whose poverty is plain to see and whose enemy takes malicious delight in his (ill fortune), outweigh the

628. The *ḥadd* punishment of flogging would be for the unlawful pleasures of indulgence in wine and women.

desertion of amusing friends, his children's hatred of him, his coarse clothing and tasteless food? This, the whole lot of it, is stuffed into the hide of the miser, poured over the head of the niggard, is hastened on[629] to the mean and clings to the man who withholds (from spending). Whereas the spender has gained approbation, enjoyed well-being, has not left (his) capacities unemployed, has paid each quality of these its due and saved its share for it, the grasping man is tortured by repressing himself and toiling for others, allied to the necessity of producing justification, the collapse of his aspiration(s), exposure to censure and humiliation, the ascendance of the black bile (melancholy) over his spirit and its dominance of his body and the power it obtains over his mode of life and joy of his heart.

An evil strain has crept into you, a weakness entered the qualities inherited from your ancestors, a canker has set to work on them, a sudden corruption has come on them unawares. This doctrine is no part of the characters of the pure of race of Thaqīf nor of the inborn traits of Quraysh. Surely you have happened to have a father of inferior race, surely having a mother of inferior race has corrupted you. Mu'āwiyah said: "Any man of Banū 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib[630] who is not a generous person is of base descent. Any man of Āl Zubayr who is not courageous is a hanger-on. Any man of the Banu 'l-Mughīrah who is not haughty is of suspect parentage."[631] Salm b. Qutaybah said: "If you see a Thaqafī acting with self-importance without entertaining folk to meals and earning money without intent to spend it consider him worthless—then worthless—then worthless."[632] Ibn Abī Burdah said: "Were it not for the youthful and foolishly prodigal of Thaqīf, the people of Basrah would have no money."

Allah is magnanimous, not acting in a miserly way; speaking truly, not lying; fulfilling (His promises) not deceiving; clement, not acting rashly; just, not acting unjustly. He commands generosity and forbids miserliness. He commands (us) to speak truly and forbids us to lie. He commands us to exercise clemency and forbids us to act rashly. He commands us to act justly and forbids us to deceive. Nor does He command (us to do) except that which He chose for Himself. Nor did He restrain us (from doing) anything to which He would not assent for Himself. They said with one voice: "Allah is the most generous of the most generous, the most glorious of the most glorious," just as they said: "The most merciful of the merciful,
144 the finest of Creators." In admonition of their beggars and direction / to the generous among them they say: "Do not try to vie with Allah in generosity, for Allah, Mighty is His name, is most generous and glorious." He, sublime is His sublimity and hallowed is His name, spake of Himself, saying: "Possessed of great

629. Perhaps reminiscent of Qur'ān, x, 11, "If Allah should hasten on the bad to men as they would hasten on the good, their due time will surely be fulfilled to them".

630. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib was the Prophet's grandfather. Al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām was of a noble house of Quraysh and an early Muslim convert. Banū Mughīrah, a hospitable noble house of Quraysh (b. Ḥārith b. al-Muṭṭalib), see p. 64.

631. A man who traces back his ancestry to a family other than his own.

632. *Bahraj* is used of false coin.

bounty" and "Possessed of long sufferance, there is no god but He" and He also said: "Possessor of majesty and generosity."[633]

They spoke of the Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, saying: "He neither laid dirham on dirham nor clay brick upon clay brick, yet he took possession of the Arabian Peninsula, collected the *ṣadaqah*-taxes and tribute was levied on his account on monies between 'Idhār[634] of Iraq, Shiḥr of Oman, up to the remotest provinces of the Yemen. Then he died in debt with his mail shirt held in pledge. Yet he was never asked for anything and said: "No". When asked of him he gave, when he promised or raised expectations his promise was as if put into execution before one's eyes, his raising of expectations as good as fulfilled. Poets extolled him for liberality, orators spoke highly of his generosity. To a single man he would indeed present a large flock of sheep and a great herd of camels.[635] The utmost a king of the Arabs would give was a hundred camels and it would be said: "He has given a hundredfold." That would only be said when by these words the acme of praise was intended. But *he* presented a man with a thousand camels and when he saw them jostling in the wadi he said: "I testify you are (truly) a prophet! This is not a bounty which (ordinary mortals give) when (they wish to be) generous!"

Hāshim boasted over the rest of Quraysh, saying: "We are those the most liberal in providing food and those who cut off most heads!" Certain ulema alluded to them as "generous, illustrious but sharp-tongued". All peoples, the avaricious, generous and those of them betwixt and between, are of one accord in condemning avarice and applauding liberality, as also they are of one accord in condemning lying and applauding truth. They say: "The supreme of generosity is generosity with what one is hard put to be generous."[636] They go so far as to speak of the pains taken by a man who possesses little (to act generously) and of a man who puts himself to the utmost pains and gives (his) all. They go so far as to consider a man who gives generously of himself superior in virtue to a man who gives generously of his money. Al-Farazdaq[637] said:

> At such a time, had Ḥātim been with the tribesmen,
> Ḥātim, generous, had himself withheld it then.

In this context, al-Farazdaq was not one to cite Ka'b b. Māmah[638] as proverbial (for generosity) when he sacrificed his life at the sharing out of the small supply

633. Qur'ān, ii, 105, xl, 3.

634. A long stretch of land between Kufah and Basrah.

635. The Prophet gave a hundred camels to 'Uyaynah b. Ḥiṣn al-Fazārī of Ghaṭafān and al-Aqra' b. Ḥābis of Tamīm among others "to compose their hearts", i.e. win them over. A list of such persons is given by Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, xiv, 313. See also Appendix 50.

636. *Afḍal al-jūd al-jūd bi-'l-majhūd.*

637. The famous poet of the Umayyad period, for ever at battle with another celebrated poet, Jarīr. Their lampooning verses are collected in their "Flytings". Ḥātim is the Ḥātim Ṭāī of Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam.*

638. For the story about Ka'b see Appendix 51.

of water (by giving up his ration)—(except to show the furthest extent to which a man might go in giving generously of himself).[639] Never have I seen an Arab declare Ḥātim's chivalry foolish in his generous disposal of all of his chattels, nor have I
145 seen / any of them condemn Ka'b's chivalry as foolish in his generous giving of himself. On the contrary, they reckon that action on Ka'b's part a source of pride for Iyād,[640] and that action on Ḥātim's part a glorious feat of munificence enshrined in tradition, to (the honour of) Ṭayyi', then that of 'Adnān over Qaḥṭān,[641] then that of the Arabs over the non-Arabs, then to the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, and to the population of that soil, over the rest of (pen)insulas and soils.

Anyone who wants to treat contrarily the very attributes which Allah, Almighty is His name, ascribes to Himself, and those which He has bestowed upon His Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, and what the Arabs as a whole and the peoples, all without exception, were created with the natural disposition to prefer, I have no alternative but to dub an infidel and consider an individual of low standing.

I have never seen a community hate and despise a generous man; on the contrary, they love and respect him. Indeed, they love his posterity and, because of him, they respect his kinsfolk. Nor have I found them hate or despise a generous man because of his exceeding the bounds of generosity to the extent of extravagance. On the contrary, I have found them study his virtues and make enquiry of one another into his fine qualities, even crediting him with extraordinary kindly actions he never did, and incorrectly attributing to him prodigious acts of generosity to which he never aspired. They therefore maintain that in this World approbation comes in double measure, just as benevolent actions receive double measure in the Hereafter. Yes, they even accredit any casual commendable deed to him, any anonymous kindly act. Then I find these very same persons react to the miser in quite the opposite fashion to this and hold quite a contrary view. One moment I find them hating him, the next despising him and—in their intense hate of him—hating his sons, and—in their utter contempt for him—hating his kinsfolk, and accrediting him with extraordinary meannesses to which he never aspired and prodigies of avarice he never committed. They even double the ill repute they heap on him in the same measure as they conferred good repute upon the generous man.

Yet I do not find disasters any readier to befall the properties of the open-handed than those of the close-fisted misers, nor do I perceive the number of misers who have become impoverished any the less.

In folk's eyes the miser is not only the individual who is mean to himself but in their view an individual who leaves no desire of his without pursuing it, no want without satisfying it, no craving but he follows after it to the end, merits the epithet

639. The sense is supplied by 'Awāmirī–Jārim.

640. Ka'b was an Iyādī tribesman.

641. i.e. to the greater glory of the northern Arabs over the southern Arabs.

of meanness and is deserving of censure. The epithet of miser applies to him only if he is stingy with everything that must result in gratitude, commend one's name and store up reward (in the Hereafter).

146 A miser may attach burdens to himself and make himself assume responsibility for obligations, taking in the way of serving women, men servants, riding animals and retinue, marvellous utensils, a splendid fashion of dressing, fine apparel, what goes far beyond the expenditure of a generous man of wealth and outdoes the open-handedness of a noble hearted generous man. But his money goes and he is adversely criticized, his (financial) circumstances change for the worse and fault is found with him. Maybe the love of dancing women will gain mastery over his (heart); he may be besotted with eunuchs. He may be over-fond of hunting, fondness for riding animals may be his main concern. His way of wasting money may be on wedding procession feasts, birth feasts and wedding feasts, extravagance at circumcision feasts, shaving of the child's head feasts and feasts when the building of a house is completed.[642] His properties may go in forced sales at a loss in business and deposits (with other persons). Sometimes an extremely avaricious man may be at the same time extremely wishful of being known (for his liberality), and his miserliness will be all the filthier and his meanness the more repugnant. He will spend his substance and waste his hoarded stocks but without emerging with a commensurate (return) and he will not escape free (of censure).

You would not seem to have seen a miser tricked, a miser beguiled, squandering his money, boasting of what he has not got, or a miser whose money has gone on building or on alchemy, or a miser who has spent his money on some vain ambition or false hope, on looking for governorships, entering into tax-farming contracts,[643] and whose tribulations in what he hopes to derive from the possession of authority exceed the tribulations he underwent in his amassing gold and silver. I have seen him spend a thousand dirhams a day upon his table and fruit, have a marriage feast at his house every day—but, that anyone should attack Islam is of less account to him than that he should attack a second round of bread and tearing apart the community of the faith comes not more hardly to him than tearing apart a round of bread, and he considers a breach of his honour of no account, but to break into his *tharīdah* he considers the most serious of breaches.

Misfortunes are the swifter to befall the properties of misers and calamities damage them the more severely, simply because they rely less upon, and have poorer expectations of, Allah. A generous man is either reliant upon or has better expectations of Allah. In every circumstance he is closer to one trusting in Allah

642. Each feast, or rather entertainment, has its special name. Al-Farrā' said: "The meal at the making of the contract of marriage is *imlāk*, that at the procession to the groom's house (*zīfāf*) is *'urs*, that of a birth *khurs*, that at shaving the infant's head *'aqīqah*, that at circumcision *'adhirah*, that at building a house *wakīrah*, that for someone arriving from travelling *naqī'ah*, the invitation a man makes for his friends *ma'dabah*."

643. The tax farmer under a *qabālah* contract must guarantee the fixed amounts from his own pocket. See *Ḳabāla* (C. Cahen) in *EI*^{2}.

and more sympathetic to one of that kind. Whatever turn his affairs take and to whatever pass he is brought by circumstances, he is not one of those persons who rely upon his prudence, one who resorts to his smartness, falls back on the excellent precautions he has taken and his vigilant watchfulness. The pretext adduced by the miser of adversities and (his) unhappy anticipations of the turn of events are an expression of poor anticipations of the Creator of adversities, and of Him who creates the Ages and the people of an Age. Do events come to pass but as determined by their Creator: do the Ages come and go but according as He who designed them disposes? Are not we certain, although ignorant of their (prime) causes that they pass to their (appointed) ends?

147 The proof that they have no fear of poverty[644] and that accumulation and withholding (of money) is either a custom with them or natural to them is that you may find a king is a miser while his kingdom is of vast extent, his revenue ample, his enemy quiescent, yet you find one of better judgement than he is open-handed, though his kingdom is more confined, his revenue less and his enemy much more active.

I am aware that Negroes are the most limited of folk in respect of thought and reflection and the most negligent of them in awareness of consequences. Did their liberality derive only from their bluntness of blade, their defective intelligences and their paucity of knowledge, (the natives) of Persia should be more avaricious than (those of) Byzantium (Rūm), Byzantium more avaricious than the Slavs, men, on the whole more avaricious than women on the whole; boys more generous than women. The least avaricious individuals ought to be of greater intellectual outlook then the most intellectual of the open-handed. The dog,[645] proverbial for its meanness, should be better acquainted with matters than the cock, proverbial for generosity. The say: "He is more generous than a bird that feeds its young from its beak", "meaner than a dog over carrion", "meaner than a dog over a bare bone". They say: "Starve your dog and it will follow you", "A dog's delight comes at the wretchedness of its owners", "Fatten a dog and it will eat you", "keener than a dog for the faeces of a new-born child", "hungrier than Ḥawmal's[646] dog", "He is more foul-mouthed than a dog", "So-and-so gathered dog-dirt", "Get away from me (*ikhsa*),"[647] as one says to a dog, "like a dog in the manger, neither eating the fodder or letting the donkey eat it". The poet said:

> She[648] put down to rest when she had travelled part of the night
> At a man in al-'Arj, meaner than a dog, (a sad plight).

644. Fear of poverty is not the reason for their avarice.

645. But see Ibn Marzubān, *The Superiority of Dogs over Many of Those who Wear Clothes*, trans. and ed. G.R. Smith and M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, London, 1978, a 4th/10th century writing.

646. Ḥawmal was a woman who starved a bitch she had, tying it up by night as a guard dog and sending it forth by day to fend for itself, until in its hunger it ate its tail.

647. Cf. modern Arabic curse "*Ikhs 'alayk*".

648. She—a she-camel.

Allah, Almighty is His name, said:[649] "His like is the like of a dog—if you attack him he lolls out his tongue or if you leave him alone he lolls out his tongue." After this analogy, Merv folk[650] should be the most intelligent of creation and Khurāsān folk the best informed of creation.

We do not find an open-handed man flee the epithet of extravagance to
148 generosity in the way we find the miser flee / the epithet avarice (*bukhl*) to economy, the courageous flee from the epithet rash, the shy man flee from the epithet bashful. Were the firm-hearted orator to be called insolent, he would be disturbed. Did the virtue of liberality lie only in the fact that all of those who go beyond the bounds (in dispensing) various forms of benevolence dislike the epithet of that virtue (being applied to them) except the generous man, therein would be what plainly demonstrates the latter's worth and is clear evidence of his merit.

Money tempts, the self covets, monies are hard to come by and the self lusts after what is hard to come by. The self (lit. selves) has a notorious weakness for trying to outdo (others) in profusion (of money), because a person without thought or reflection is given to respect for a man of wealth even if he can get nothing out of him. The ancient said:

Her love grew the more that from it she was withheld.
Dearest to man is what 'er from him is withheld.

In one of the books of the Persians: "Any strong man under duress is humiliated." Mu'ādhah al-'Adawiyyah[651] said: "Any man over whom the upper hand has been gained is hated or despised."

If they were accumulating (money) for their sons and toiling on their behalf, eager (to make money) on their account, they would surely make over to them much of what they are trying to acquire and surely refrain from making accounts with them over a good deal of what they are keen to have. But this is partly what makes some bequeathers hateful to the heirs and those who are to succeed not wish a long life for their predecessors. Were they working to earn for their sons and piling up (money) for them, eunuchs would surely not accumulate property and monks store up treasures and a barren woman would be relieved of humiliation of desire and a barren man of the trouble eagerness (to make money) gives him. But how can this be when we find him—after the decease of his son of whom he made a pretext and on behalf of whom he used to accumulate (money)—just as he was with regard to the quest (for money) and eagerness (to acquire it), just as he was too with regard to piling it up and holding back (from spending it).

Ordinary folk are not backward in the quest (of money), but those who corner the market and misers set no limit to their activity and, after achieving riches, do

649. Qur'ān, vii, 175.

650. See p. 13 seq. for the *bukhl* of Merv folk.

651. A lady mentioned by al-Jāḥiẓ among the eloquent of the pious and ascetic, who died in 83/702. She quoted Tradition on the authority of 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's widow.

not expend their surplus and do not slacken at all in quest (of money) and in niggardliness (with it) because they dwell in a transient abode, subject to evanescence: so much so that were they certain of eternity they would disregard such superficialities. The miser is diligent and the ordinary man is not backward. Anyone who does not avail himself of the aid of a resolute temperament, a burning
149 ardour / and sound insight to combat what I have described to you, is either one of the common folk or a wretched miser and he supports the pretext they make of their sons and their plea of fearing the changes of the Ages.

The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said to an envoy who lied[652] in his presence, a man of generosity: "But for a certain thing for which Allah loves you I would have rejected you as a tribal envoy in disgrace." The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, was asked: "Would you like white women and tawny camels?"[653] "Who are they?" said he. "Banū Mudlij," they answered, but he said: "Their hospitality to the guest and maintenance of the ties of kinship holds me back (from raiding them)." He said to them also: "When they slaughter (sacrificial animals at a pilgrimage) they make the blood[654] flow and when they give the *talbiyah*[655] verses they shout them repeatedly." He asked the Supporters (Anṣār): "Who is your lord?" "Jadd b. Qays,"[656] they replied, "though he is suspected of avarice." "What disease is a worse than avarice?" commented the Prophet. (He deemed it a disease), then, the worst of diseases. He said to the Supporters: "Indeed, *wallāhi*, never have I known you not to rally in number at an alarm[657] but to be few when booty (is divided)." He said: "That a man should go to sea is evidence enough of greediness in him." He said: "If a son of Adam (any man) had two wadis full of cattle/arable land/palms he would want still a third; a son of Adam derives satiety only from earth, but Allah relents to him who repents." He said: "Liberality is part of propriety and propriety part of faith." He said: "Allah is munificent, loving munificence (in man)." He said: "Dispense freely, Bilāl,[658] and fear not any shortcoming of the Lord of the Heavenly

652. It is tribal ethic that a tribesman does not lie.

653. i.e. would you like to raid Banū Mudlij (a section (*baṭn*) of Kināna) for white women, etc.

654. Streams of blood from slaughtered animals at the side of a house are "a sort of boast of affluence or generosity" (see R.B. Serjeant, *The South Arabian Hunt*, London, 1976, 10).

655. The *talbiyah* is verses commencing *Labbayka* which pilgrims to the pre-Islamic gods declaimed as they approached a shrine. The Tradition runs: "The most excellent of the pilgrimage actions is the raising of the voice in the *talbiyah* and shedding of the blood of the sacrificial animals." (*Afḍal al-Ḥajj al-ʿajj wa-ʾl-thajj*).

656. Jadd b. Qays b. Salimah of Kaʿb b. Salimah, Lord (Sayyid) of Banū Salimah was one of the Supporters of the Prophet at Medina, but reckoned a "Hypocrite" for hanging back from allegiance to the Prophet at al-Ḥudaybiyah and the Tabūk campaign. He is said to be referred to in two Qur'ān passages. The Prophet's bard Ḥassān b. Thābit's verses are here paraphrased by al-Jāḥiẓ (see his *Dīwān*, ed. 'Arafat, i, 460).

657. Such as a raid.

658. Bilāl b. Rabāh, the black slave of the Prophet, the first *muʾadhdhin* in Islam. The story goes that the Prophet called Bilāl to bring dates, which he did, a handful at a time, and the Prophet uttered these words.

Throne." He said: "Do not be mean with what you have so that you be not (treated meanly in turn)." He said: "Don't keep counting the cost lest it be counted against you." They said: "What is left over of (your) travel provisions is no use to you." He called gold and silver "the two stones" simply because he wanted to lower their value and the temptation they have for folk. He said to Qays b. 'Āṣim:[659] "Of your property you own only what you consume and destroy, what you wear and wear out, what you bestow and hand on (to others) and apart from this all soever goes to the heir." Al-Namir b. Tawlab[660] said:

Garner and hold, she urged me, as her heart in fear
Was wont to lie to her of turns of fate austere.

How many the generous donor we've seen live,
Trusted, open-handed, ever asked to give.

As they passed me by, you (wife), were there. In dismay
I kept thinking I want them[661] here and you away.

O reproachful, if my ghost hies to a land arid,
Remote, distant from my kinsman and comrade hid,

You'll see I was no master of what I left spare
That what I spent (on others) came from my own share.

Oft one herding camels toils, counting them his own,
In tending them, wearied, works himself to the bone.

Another owner drives them forth at dawn one day—
Changed for tombstones and grave walls, *he* lies hid away.

He also said:

She began to weep that I bought for gallants fine
For an old done camel, a skin and jar of wine.

Regaled (them) with bowls of meat from young camels four,
Then regaled (them) with meat of four young camels more.

Do you weep for some contemptible trifling thing?
Folly the eye that weeps where should be no weeping.

659. Qays b. 'Āṣim . . . b. Minqar came with the delegation of Tamīm to the Prophet after Mecca had fallen to him, and became a Muslim. The Prophet called him Lord of the People of Camel-Hair Tents. He was a "knight" and poet famed for his staidness and forbearance.

660. Al-Namir b. Tawlab, a poet of the pre-Islamic age who lived up till the caliphate of 'Umar, lived a life of luxury though not wealthy. His verse resembles that of Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī and like the latter he was generous and wasteful of his money. He married a woman of the Banū Asad captured in a raid. She detested him but he kept her till she bore him sons. She kept longing for her people and he gave in and let her visit her tribe after coming to an agreement with her but she did not return to him. Many of his poems are about her. See Appendix 52.

661. By them he means the generous open-handed men of the previous verses.

When my brothers come to me, let them but be,
To divert themselves with living, or play with me.

Don't drive them from my carpet. It is, you will see,
Inevitable, some day, my bed empty will be.

Why don't you ask about 'Adiyā'[662] and his house,
His horses, his wine, never short at a carouse?

Al-Ḥārith b. Ḥillizah[663] said:

Even while a lad toils and for him it is toiled
Death, Extirpator, as his lot is predestined.
Whatever property with care he has managed
He leaves the basest sort of men to dissipate.
Leave not a camel seven months heavy with young,
The last of her milk in her udders still retained.[664]
For whose she will be when she gives birth you know not.

151 Al-Hudhalī said:

Emulate you in fame would the generous. Emulate them all!
Consume and replace. All things that the wind mows down, flat must fall.

A woman said:

To gallant youth horses you gave, long-reaching, tall,
Camels (so milk rich) the milker scarce can believe,
Sheep, like a locust swarm in flight, the wherewithal
Of your days (on Earth)—but all must depart and leave.

Tamīm b. Muqbil[665] said:

Consume and replace. Wealth is but a loan.[666]
Eat it up with Time—which eats it also.

662. Father of Samaw'al, the Jewish lord of a castle al-Ablaq at Taymā, north of Medina, famous for his loyalty. The Arabs say: "More loyal than al-Samaw'al". The poet means, "Why do you not ask about 'Adiyā"s wealth and generosity?"

663. A famous pre-Islamic poet, one of whose *qasīdahs* is included in the Seven Golden Odes (*al-Muʿallaqāt*).

664. When a camel is seven months pregnant her milk dries up but it seems that the herders leave a little of her milk before that in the udder to help fatten the young in her belly. Al-Mubarrad says the Arabs used to wet the udders with cold water to make the said young fatter. The sense of the verses is that one should not bother to leave milk in the udder for this reason, since you do not know if the animal will remain in your possession, either because it might be taken in a raid or you might die and it pass into the possession of another.

665. A Bedouin of Banū 'Ajlān of 'Āmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿah of the pre-Islamic age. He lived till the time of the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who arraigned him before the poet Ḥassān b. Thābit and imprisoned him. Only a few scattered lines of his verse are extant.

666. *'Arah*, loan, also means "what is taken by persons in turn", appropriate in this context.

Abu 'l-Dharr said: "In your chattels you have partners twain—the heir and adversity." Al-Ḥuṭay'ah[667] said:

He who does good shall always in full receive his reward
'Twixt Allah and folk never 'tis lost untoward.

In Tradition occurs (the maxim): "People who do kindness in the World shall receive kindness in the Hereafter", and in the proverb (it is said): "Be kind even though it be to a dog." He (Allah) said, urging a little (benevolence) irrespective of a lot, He, Almighty is His name, said: "And whosoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it, and whosoever does an atom's weight of evil shall see it."[668] 'Ā'ishah said of a grape: "In it are atom-weights indeed." This is why they said in the proverb: "He who despises (giving a small thing) is depriving many (needy persons)."[669] Salm b. Qutaybah said: "One of them is ashamed to offer a little food but commits a greater fault than this (in offering none)." He said: "A man's putting himself about (despite his limited resources, counts) for more than
152 (giving) / out of ample resources." The Apostle of Allah, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, placed the efforts made by a poor man (to act charitably) above those of the expenditure of a wealthy man from what is surplus[670] (to his requirements), even though his (the poor man's) effort be small in amount and the wealthy man's surplus be a great deal. They said: "Don't let the smallness of a favour hold you back from doing it." The Prophet, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, said: "Guard yourselves against Hell-Fire be it but by half a date."[671] He also said: "Do not turn the beggar away even though it be only by (giving him) a burned hoof," and also: "Do not turn him away if only (by giving him) a sheep's hoof," and: "Do not you despise a morsel for it brings a return as mighty as a mountain,[672] because of Allah's, Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, words: 'Allah shall blot out usury and shall augment gifts of alms,' "[673] and (the Prophet said): "Do not you turn him away even though it be only by giving him an end of rope."[674] The Arabs say: "Your brother has come to you, asking you to make up the rest of what he needs to complete (something), so make it up for him."[675] They also say: "A man who refuses to make up the remainder still lacking is extremely mean."

667. Jarwal b. Aws b. Malik al-Ḥuṭay'ah (the Dwarf or Deformed), a famous poet and lampoonist known for his venality. See Appendix 53.

668. Qur'ān, xcix, 7–8.

669. So explained by 'Awāmirī–Jārim.

670. Cf. Qur'ān, ii, 219. Surplus = what is abundant and redundant.

671. Said to mean: "To not reduce the 'alms' (*ṣadaqah*) you pay in any way."

672. On the Day of Resurrection ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

673. Qur'ān, ii, 275. Al-Bayḍāwī, *in loco*, interprets this verse as meaning that Allah does away with the good fortune (*barakah*) of usury "and the money which comes into it", but doubles the reward for (money spent in "alms") and blesses it.

674. Tradition in Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, iii, 483.

675. Explained as enough wool or camel/goat hair to complete something.

They said: "A miser if he begs is importunate—if he is begged of he puts off with promises." They said: "If he is begged of, he is niggardly and if he does give, it is with a hidden feeling of hatred." They said: "He refuses before listening and gets angry before comprehending." They said: "The miser when he is begged of stays stolid, unmoved—the generous man when begged of rejoices to do good." The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said: "From the heavens two heralds each day make proclamation, one of them saying: 'O Allah, the spender replenish with speed,' the other saying: 'Haste ruin to the man of greed.' " They said: "The worst of the three is the one who censures[676]—he withholds his milk and the milk of others." Allah, Almighty is His name, said:[677] "Those who are miserly and bid others be miserly too." In the proverb they said, when fate has compelled a (man) to resort to a miser: "It is an evil circumstance that has compelled you to resort to the marrow of a hock."[678] The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said: "Pronounce justice, but give grace." He, Allah bless and honour him, said: "I forbid you to disobey (your) mothers, to bury (alive your) daughters,[679] to refuse (to give) but (to say) 'hand over'." Allah, great and glorious is He, said; "And who, for the love of Him,[680] give food to the poor man, the orphan and the captive", and
153 He said:[681] "You shall not attain to goodness until / you spend of what[682] you love", and He said:[683] "And they give them preference over themselves even if there should be poverty with them, and whosoever are preserved from their own avarice—those are they who are the prosperous." Of fortitude in face of calamity and of the outcome of fortitude they said: "At daybreak, tribesfolk commend journeying by night."[684] They said: "Anxieties, then they were dispelled."[685] Al-Khuraymī said:

676. The three are one who receives, one who gives and one who censures the giver. "Milk", lit., "flow of milk".

677. Qur'ān, iv, 36.

678. i.e. only a man in the extreme of poverty will try to extract marrow from an animal's hock-bone.

679. The pre-Islamic Arabians resorted to burying newly born girls alive, though to what extent is unknown. The Qur'ān, lxxxxi, 8, says: "And when the female child who was buried alive shall be asked for what sin she was put to death". It seems likely that when this did take place it would be on account of scarcity of food. It is, however, said to be for fear of dishonour (*'ār*) through them in some way.

680. Or "for love of food". Qur'ān, lxxvi, 8.

681. Qur'ān, iii, 92.

682. i.e. money.

683. Qur'ān, lix, 9. The verse relates to the material aid given in Yathrib by the Prophet's Supporters (Anṣār) to his Quraysh adherents (al-Muhājirūn) come to join him there.

684. A proverb said to have first been uttered by the celebrated early Muslim general Khālid b. al-Walīd.

685. This verse is of al-Aghlab al-'Ijlī. It is cited by al-Maydānī as a proverb and is quoted in al-Minqarī, *Waq'at Ṣiffīn*, 254. By anxieties, the longer phrase *ghamarāt al-ḥarb*, the rigours of war, is probably meant.

In each heart, twixt generosity lies there a steep pass
In which is a rugged ascent but easy the descent;
And, in every gift a gallant confers, he would wish,
When once it is made, if only it be munificent.

They said: "The best of folk are the best of folk to (other) folk and the worst of folk are the worst of folk to (other) folk", and "The best of your money is what is of advantage to you", and "How strange (to find) extreme old age coupled with youthfulness of desire!" The *rajaz*[686] poet said:

Each of us hopes a long term to remain.
Alas, of such hopes the fates are the bane.

'Ubaydullāh b. 'Ikrāsh[687] said: "Time perfidious, an heir intently envious, a go-getter malicious. Do not feel safe from the perfidious and be (yourself) the heir intently envious!" He said: "The son of Adam becomes decrepit but two things stay youthful with him—greed and hope." They would find it a shaming fault in a man who eats by himself and say: "Ibn 'Umar[688] never ate by himself", and: "Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) never ate by himself." Mujāshi' b. al-Raba'ī heard them say: "An avaricious man is more to be excused than an unjust one," and he remarked: "Allah bring shame on two things, the better of which is avarice." Bakr b. 'Abdullāh al-Muzanī said: "Were this mosque full of men, then were I asked: 'Who is the best of them?' I would certainly reply: 'The best of them to them.' " The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said: "Shall I not instruct you as to those of you who are evil-doers?" "Yes, indeed, O Apostle of Allah," they answered. He said: "He who puts down by himself,[689] refuses to aid by a gift and beats his slave." At the bier of a man a woman said: "Truly, *wallāhi*, your money didn't go into your belly nor did you order your wife about."

Ibn al-Taw'am's Retort[690]

154 When the epistle[691] reached Ibn al-Taw'am he was averse to replying to Abu 'l-'Āṣ because of the combativeness and break in relations implicit in it and he was

686. The jingly metre used especially in extempore verse on political and other occasions in Arabia.

687. A 1st-century Tamīmī of Basrah whose father Dhu'ayb had been head of the delegation from his tribe to the Prophet bringing him their "alms" tax.

688. i.e. 'Abdullāh, son of the Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, who accompanied his father from Mecca to Medinah on the *hijrah*. He lived till the year 73/692–3.

689. Seemingly when a body of travellers dismounts to eat, this would be an individual who eats by himself not sharing his food.

690. Ibn al-Taw'am al-Raqāshī was one of the intelligent men of al-Jāḥiẓ's circle, a man of judgement, able to express himself well, a miser and polemicist. He is cited in the *Kitāb al-Bayān* of al-Jāḥiẓ in a number of places ('Awāmirī–Jārim), but little seems to be known of him.

691. Of Abu 'l-'Āṣ al-Thaqafī, p. 141 seq.

apprehensive the matter would progress beyond this to something more serious. So he penned the following and despatched it to al-Thaqafī.

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful

To proceed—I have heard what Abu l'-'Āṣ has said about me,[692] and of his making my name notorious and of his vile allegations against me. Nothing prevents me from replying to him (in kind) except that, if he replies to me, my reply to him over his second effusion would be better left aside than my reply to his first one. For if I make reply to his initiative and a reply to his second reply, we shall come to recriminations and get to the point of appealing to an arbiter. Any person who goes so far as that already accepts litigation as (his) lot and folly as his fate.

Only a person who recognizes the cause of trouble is able to protect himself from causes leading to litigation. Only a person whom Allah preserves from obstinacy with its attendant folly and renders immune to obstinacy with its unyieldingness, has a balanced temperament and level-headed notions. A person whose humours[693] are in equilibrium and thoughts are in proper balance is acquainted with a middle course of action (only), and finds his actions always (take a middle course) between falling short and excess, because a well-balanced thing generates a well-balanced thing just as, similarly, something discordant generates a discordant thing. No rebuke can divert the wrong-headed man from his course and he has no aim but destruction. An obstinate man has neither a (proper) approach nor direction: with him no magic spell (has any effect), no wile (can divert) him. Every unstable person on earth is lacking in self-restraint, at the mercy of any wind that blows.

Have nothing to do with the idiot with no mind of his own,[694] for he is a useless individual with no good in him; avoid mounting a refractory horse for its object is to kill with despatch. (There is no good in an unstable person) ever susceptible
155 to new notions or a refractory horse. / An unstable person is worse than an obstinate one since you are not aware to which phase of his he is tending or which direction he is pursuing. So it is that an intelligent man can trick an intelligent man but not a fool—because the ways in which an intelligent man manages his affairs and his contrivances are known, the paths of the thoughts that occur to him well trodden, his opinions restricted and finite, but the way in which a fool manages his affairs and his contrivances has no single direction and anyone who misses the way to them is giving an untrue account of them. True information about a single matter is one (version only) but false information about a single matter is in countless numbers and knows no limit. The obstinate man slays with despatch, outright, but the unstable man slays by torture.[695]

692. Ibn al-Taw'am writes "said about us", but clearly throughout the paragraph he uses the first person plural form to refer to himself.

693. The four humours. Cf. note 6.

694. *Immā'/ammā'*, in present day Iraqi colloquial "a yes-man". Al-Ḥājiri refers to a similar passage of a psychological content in a Berlin MS. "A Chrestomathy (*Mukhtār*) of the sayings of al-Jāḥiẓ" in the Berlin Library.

695. 'Awāmirī–Jārim explain "torture" as: "The unstable man does you harm on separate occasions so it is as if he were torturing you to death."

If I say: "It is not him[696] whom I am attacking and if I advance an argument it is not he whom I am refuting, but it is to you that I address (these) words and it is to you that I direct (this) counsel." They have said: "Keep your secret undisclosed for your secret is part of your blood." It is all the same whether your person departs (this life) or whether what constitutes the mainstay of your person departs. Al-Munjāb al-'Anbarī said: "What money can put to rights is no great thing." The loss of the thing whereby affairs can be put to rights is of greater moment than the affairs (themselves). On this account they say of camels: "Were it only that through them blood[697] is staunched." So the thing which constitutes the value of camels and other things beside camels is the more deserving of being conserved. They concluded that the retention of money is harder than amassing it. The poet said therefore:

Keeping wealth you were intent to amass, for you
Is harder than the amassing you sought to do.

It is for this reason that a purchaser of land replies to the vendor of it when the latter says to him: "I hand it over to you, slow to yield, heavy in toil."[698] (He says:) "I hand it over to you, slow in collecting, quickly dispersed."

The dirham is the axis on which the millstone of the World revolves. You must know that saving oneself from the dirham's way of bounding and slipping away and (being on one's guard against) the intoxication and fluctuation of riches is difficult. Were the guardian of it sound in mind and limb, he would surely bring it back to its tether when it slips away and fasten its shackle more securely. But I find him too weak to manage it through its restlessness in his hands. Do not let yourself be deceived by their expression "silent property",[699] for it speaks more distinctly than any orator and slanders more (harmfully) than any slanderer. Pay no heed to their expression: "these two stones",[700] but be suspi-
156 cious of / their solidity, passivity, reluctance to depart and protracted stay, for their work while at rest and destruction of the humours while stationary is more effective than the action of poison in becoming diffused in the blood and (more effective) than a ferocious lion. So if you do not take adequate action over it (the dirham) until you miss it and use your wits about it until you are using your wits to get it (back), the grave will be better for you than poverty and prison better for you than humiliation.

These words of mine are (bitterness) bringing everlasting sweetness in its train. Abu 'l-'Āṣī's words are sweetness bringing everlasting bitterness in its train. So

696. i.e. the unstable man.

697. Aktham b. Ṣayfī is quoted as saying that camels save blood-(shed) because they are paid over as blood-money and turn the seeker of vengeance from seeking to kill a murderer.

698. Slow to yield crops. "Toil" may also be taken as "expense, burdens" etc.

699. Land, commodities, etc., as opposed to "vocal property", cattle, etc.

700. i.e. gold and silver.

stick to a reliable person for yourself and do not accept that the chameleon mounting a branch be more resolute than you. The poet says:[701]

How was it they had a chameleon of a *tanḍub* tree[702]
That, unless it grasps another, lets not a branch go free?

Beware of putting out a dirham of your money until you see something better than it in its place. Do not have regard for (mere) quantity for if one were to take from a sand drift without putting any back on it the whole lot would go.

Folk talk much of generosity and the esteem in which it is held, of liberality and the honour accorded it, calling extravagance generosity and considering it liberality. Yet how can it be so when it is the product of something between weakness, lying and bragging? And how so when a gift is extravagance only if it exceeds what is due, and liberality (does not go) beyond what is due, to what is wrong? And if what is wrong is liberality what is due is meanness. Extravagance, Allah preserve you, is disobedience, and if disobedience to Allah is liberality, obedience to Him is meanness. Surely if a single epithet covers them both[703] and a single judgement comprises both—and the opposite of right is certainly wrong as the opposite of truth surely is lying; of fidelity, treachery; of injustice, justice; of knowledge, ignorance—a single epithet will indeed cover (all) these qualities and a single judgement will comprise them (all).

I find Allah has denounced extragavance and denounced disdain/scorn[704] and denounced partisanship, and I find He has specified extravagance for what He did not specify disdain, because a man's affection to his sub-tribe does not fall within partisanship and his scorn of tyrannical treatment does not fall within the disdain of the pre-Islamic age. Partisanship is what passes beyond the rightful
157 only and the disdain denounced is what goes beyond / the just. I find the noun *anafah* (disdain) may occur in both a laudatory and a blameworthy sense, but I never find either the noun partisanship or the noun extravagance occurs in any sense but a blameworthy one. Only an ignorant man, devoid of knowledge, is pleased with the epithet extravagant—or else a man is pleased with it only because nobody calls him extravagant until, in his opinion, he has overstepped the limit of generosity, and he rightly credits him (with generosity) then wrongly follows it (with commending his extravagance).[705] If he be pleased in any other

701. The poet is Abū Dāwūd al-Iyādī.

702. The verse is preceded by two others describing how camels with the litters in which women are conveyed are being urged on by an energetic and determined driver, as resolute in his purpose as the chameleon. The *tanḍub* is a tree with thick white branches, wizened leaves, with a dry dusty appearance.

703. i.e. generosity (*karam*) and liberality (*jūd*) of the opening sentence.

704. Cf. Qur'ān, xlviii, 25. "When those who had disbelieved set disdain (*ḥamiyyah*) in their hearts, the disdain of the Ignorance (*jāhiliyyah*)".

705. Following 'Awāmirī–Jārim.

way than this[706] he has shared in error with the flatterer and like him, has put the matter out of context.

They have spoken much of liberality. Liberality is just like other laudable qualities not devoid of a measure of reproach, for nothing is free of some deficiency and weakness. The ancients averred that liberality is occasioned by affluence, that affluence begets mindless folly and that after the mindless fool comes only the idiot. They tell of Chosroes that he said: "Be on your guard against the assault of a man of liberality when he is hungry and the mean man when he is full." It is all one whether he be hungry and so act unjustly, anger by disagreeable words and act without consideration (of others) or be hungry and so lie, humiliate himself and stoop to meanness.[707] It is all one whether he be hungry and so do others injustice or be hungry and do himself injustice—and injustice is meanness. If injustice be not meanness then acting justly is not nobility. If bounty to a person who does not merit bounty be liberality, then bounty to a person on whom it ought to be conferred is not liberality. Bounty, if it be for (the sake of) Allah, is out of gratitude to Him, and gratitude is liberality. How can bountifulness when it is disobedience be liberality? How can a person who through your favours (to him) arrives at your disobedience (to Allah) be free of shame, and who, through your benefactions (to him) brings (Allah's) wrath down upon you? Liberality is obedience, meanness is just disobedience and what passes beyond what is due is not generosity, nor is what is at variance with gratitude, liberality. If he who goes beyond what is due is indeed generous/noble then indeed he who falls short of it is generous also.[708]

If you pronounce in favour of what ordinary folk think[709] the commonalty are no example. How can anyone who does not consider, discriminate, reflect and compare, form an example? If you pronounce in favour of the dicta of the poets and what the ignorant folk of the Age of Ignorance believed (let me say that) what they considered unseemly in things of which the excellence is not in doubt is far too much for me to ascertain or concern myself with investigating. However,
158 generosity is just what renders gratitude obligatory, as likewise miserliness is / just what renders reproach obligatory. A gift will not be a favour to the recipient unless it is intended for that self-same recipient;[710] nor will it be obligatory for him to (express) gratitude unless (he) be expressly intended. Anyone whose generosity

706. e.g. in that he supposes, for example, that the man who commends him is attributing to him commendable liberality only, he has shared in error with the flatterer.

707. There is a rhyming play on words in this sentence. "Humiliate himself . . . meanness"—both verbs also mean "to take the teat in the mouth". This is an indication of meanness as al-Jāḥiẓ has explained (*supra*, p. 124).

708. i.e. if he who exceeds what is right (to give) to what is wrong to give (because it is extravagance) then the man who fails to give must also be generous.

709. i.e. their reckoning all extravagance to be generosity.

710. The gift will not be free of reproach unless it be intended solely for the actual recipient ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

brings in a return to him and but for the return it brings him, would not have acted generously toward you, and were the same thing available for him through another person would not have sought you out, has made you a mere means[711] to achieve his end and a steed to reach (the object of) his love, and but for some of what (I) have said[712] you would certainly have a right over him that should make it obligatory to express (his) gratitude. Nor is gratitude obligatory to someone like this, even if you do derive benefit through him from it, seeing that he acted for himself, because, were that advantage (he derives) to be available through someone other than yourself he would certainly not have gone beyond him to you.

The only person to be truly credited with generosity and shown gratitude for a benefaction according to the argument of logic is the person who, if he acts generously toward you, does so for your sake and intends to benefit you without his generosity bringing him any benefits in return in any way at all—and that is Allah alone without partner. Our gratitude to people for some of what has come to us through their hands is on account of two matters only—one of which is application to acts of devotion. Allah has invited (us) to obey in venerating (our) parents[713] even if they be fiends (*shayṭānān*) and those older than us even if we be more virtuous than they are. The other is that the self, so long as it does not get a grasp of affairs and distinguish the significances (between them), is at first inspired with affection for the person at whose hands benefit has come its way—even if the matter neither meant nor intended it (the self).

I find a man's gift to his fellow man is not excluded from being for the sake of Allah or some other than Allah. If it be for the sake of Allah recompense for it is Allah's responsibility. Following the argument of logic, how can it be an obligation of mine to show him gratitude when, had he chanced on a casual wayfarer, not me, he would neither have provided me with a mount nor made me a gift? Either he made me a gift to gain good repute, and if the business was so he simply made me a ladder to his trafficking, a means to obtain the object of his desire; or else his donation to me was by way of compassion and tender-heartedness and the pain and heart-wringing that he feels. If it was for that reason he gave to me, he has but cured himself of his malady and resembles a man who loosens the rope strangling him. If he gave to me merely looking for recompense and desire for compensation the procedure of this is well understood. If he gave to me only out of fear of my (right) arm or my tongue or to draw my aid and support to him—this is the way of all that I have described and set out in detail.

159 The noun *jūd* (generosity) has two fundamental elements, one of which is actual sense and the other metaphor. The actual sense is what proceeds from Allah and the metaphor is that which is derived from this noun. That which is for the sake

711. Lit. a ferryboat, bridge etc.

712. Explained by 'Awāmirī–Jārim as "But for fear of being accused of exaggeration". It is the man who has made the gift who should be grateful, as he has achieved his purpose, not the recipient.

713. Cf. Qur'ān, xxxi, 13.

of Allah is commendable and obedience to Allah. When the gift does not proceed from Allah and is not for the sake of Allah this does not come within what they name *jūd*. So what do you think about what they name extravagance?

You should comprehend that what I expound and represent to you—the pursuit of gain, attempt at making a comfortable livelihood, spongers battening (on the weak) by corrupt means, are widespread, prevalent, blatantly engulfing (society). Furthermore, many of those credited with moral rectitude and honourable standing, the guardianship (of morals) and devoutness do in fact acquire an ample share and full measure (of profits from unethical pursuits). So what do you think about the mass and multitude of people? And the more so—what think you of poets and orators who learn the (art of) eloquent public speaking to employ it in making a good living? Those are folk who like men of substance to have crossed over the border from security to indifference so that there would be no guard or protector for property. Watch out for them then, and pay no attention to the fine turn-out of (any) one of them, for a wretched pauper is more content than he is—take no heed of his mount for a beggar is more honest than he is. You should realize that he is clad in the hide of a wretched pauper even though he wears the clothes of superior persons, and his spirit is that of a man of base degree though it be in the body of a king. Every one of them, though their modes of begging differ and the extent of their demands varies, is a poor wretch. But one demands expensive fashionable clothes[714] and (the) other asks for rags, another asks for *danaqs*[715] while another demands thousands. Yet the direction this fellow takes is the same as this (other); the way this fellow makes a living is the same as this (other). It is only in the amounts they demand that they differ, depending on (their) degree of skill and means. Beware of the spells (they cast) and the traps they set for you; guard your fortune from the schemes they contrive to bring ruin on it. Act on the assumption that their sorcery beguiles the mind and dazzles the eyes. The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said: "Sorcery is a part of eloquence." 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz[716] heard a man speaking about something and he said: "This, *wallāhi*, is legitimate sorcery!" The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said: "No deceiving by flattery."[717] So be on your guard against accepting praise since a person who accepts praise to his face is like one indulging in self-praise.

160 Your money is not sufficiently ample for those who want it nor will it go far enough to satisfy those who ask for it. Were you to gratify them at the expense of angering those like them it would indeed be "clear loss".[718] So how will it be when those who are angry outnumber many times those who are gratified? An angry man's lampoon is more damaging than the loss of a laudatory poem by a gratified

714. *'Ilqah* is a costly garment of which a plural could be *'ilaq* (not recorded in the lexicons). Note the rhyme with *khiraq*, rags. Al-Ḥājirī's reading *'ulaq* means a large amount.

715. One-sixth of a dinar.

716. The Umayyad Caliph.

717. A Tradition as "When you sell say: *'Lā khilābah'*, i.e. no cheating."

718. Cf. Qur'ān, xxii, 10 and xxxix, 14.

man. Nor when they assail you with their iron arrow-heads and one after the other comes at you with their arrows will you see one of those you gratified while angering them, taking up your defence or lampooning a poet on your behalf. On the contrary, he will let you be a butt for their arrows and a practice-ring[719] for their shafts. Then he will say: "What would it have cost him if he had satisfied them?" How is he to satisfy them when to satisfy them all is a thing unattainable? The ancient said: "How can it come about that you satisfy people at odds with each other?" "To refuse all", they replied, "is more pleasing to all."

I warn you of places where those swindled (are laid open) to slaughter and I hold you above places where those who are cheated sleep. You are not like a person still undergoing awkwardnesses in (his) affairs, swallowing the bitterness of life, bearing the burden of toil and drinking the cup of humiliation until his skin has nearly grown inured to that and his heart is untroubled by it. Poverty for the likes of you is doubly painful and the anguish of one who has never known pain is the more acute. Whereas one who has always been poor is not acquainted with malicious persons and the disagreeable delight of the envious (at his misfortunes) does not intrude on him, nor is he reproached for his poverty nor becomes an admonitory warning to others, a legend continuing to be recalled and whose sons curse him after he has died.

Spare me the (lying) tales of the spongers who batten (on others)[720] and the spells cast by swindlers. Folk still continue to safeguard their money from situations which expose it to extravagance and keep it away from squandering of (all) kinds. Spare me from what we only see in affected verse, fabricated history and spurious books. One of the people of this age of ours has said; "Noble deeds have departed except from books."[721] So stick to what you know and have nothing to do with what you don't know.

Have you ever seen anybody who expended his money on folk, the enrichment of whom was the cause of his poverty—that when he became impoverished he greeted them (and they returned his greetings), apart from anything else?[722] Haven't you seen them split into those who call him a fool and avoid him, and those who say: "Why doesn't he take his predicament to So-and-so for whom he used to show a preference, bring him forward, pick him out and pay him special attention?" Then too perhaps one of them will tax him with ill deeds he had not done, alleging them as an excuse for refusing him and a reason for denying him (anything).

161 Allah, Almighty is His name, said: "On a day when a limb is bared[723] and they

719. A ring by aiming at which one learns to thrust with a spear or shaft.

720. Such as women, orphans, etc.

721. In *al-Ḥayawan*, i, 52, al-Jāḥiẓ says: "A friend of mine narrated a tale to me saying: 'With a Syrian shaykh I read a book containing the glorious deeds handed down by tradition of (the tribe) Ghaṭafān and he said: "Noble deeds have departed except from books." ' "

722. Apart from the abuse they inflicted upon him ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

723. Qur'ān, lxviii, 43. The image is that the leg is bared in flight as, for instance, at a Bedouin raid.

are called upon to prostrate themselves but they are unable to do so, with downcast gaze, humiliation overwhelming them, though they had been called upon to prostrate themselves while they were (still) safe." I am the one who rises to harangue and rebuke you, to command and forbid you while you are yet sound of mind and honour, with money in plenty, in fortunate circumstance. So take care that tomorrow I do not rise to confront you, accuse, reproach, scold and rebuke (you) when you are sick of heart, (your) honour impugned, short of money and in evil circumstance.

The extreme of anguish is not the stretching out of the neck waiting for the sword to fall as (the waiting) is of short time and feeling numbed (by terror). But anguish in the extreme is that destitution come into the open, time be long drawn out and expedients of no avail. Added to which you will not be without a reproachful friend, malicious cousin, a jealous neighbour, a friend turned foe, a wife offering a gift for divorce, a slave-woman demanding to be sold,[724] a slave who despises you and a son who upbraids you in harsh words. So give consideration as to how the situation (involving) loss of commendation compares with this anguishing situation that I have recounted to you.

Moreover, praise is something that goes down easily but perhaps it will not be fed to you; commendation is victuals and perhaps you will be deprived of it. The greater part of people's benefactions becomes lost (to mind) and furthermore the memory (of them) has been lost with the departure of the people (who conferred them). Don't you know that when (laudatory) versifying does not find a market, its exponents are reduced to silence and when a loss enters into anything, versifying bears its share of it. (This happened) when the power passed to the non-Arabs; the non-Arabs do not conserve genealogies or preserve the memory of assemblies,[725] because one who lives in fertile country with sufficiency (of means), overcome by the intoxication of riches, is prone to forget and few thoughts (on such matters) occur to his mind, whereas one who is needy is actively preoccupied and much given to scrutinizing (genealogies, etc.). The defect of riches is that they leave a legacy of stupidity—the virtue of poverty is that it quickens the wits. If you combine riches with neglect of the self, riches will intoxicate you, and the intoxication of riches is the wish of the spongers and incitement to the swindlers. If you have not been content with the lot of the sleeper and the way of life of beasts but have liked to bring together the wealthy man's wholeness of personality, the honour of riches and delight in power, with the acumen of the man of limited means, the thoughts occurring to the poor man, the knowingness of the vagabond and the enquiring (mind) of the scholar,

724. Though a wife cannot divorce her husband she can offer him such compensation as may induce him to liberate her. This procedure would be followed where a marriage has broken down. A slave-woman under similar circumstances asks her master to sell her.

725. The non-Arabs are not interested in being belauded for their noble ancestry and the assemblies at which Arab orators made eloquent speeches that were preserved in Arab memory.

you will have been economical in expenditure, ready for changes of fortune and on your guard against any swindler.

162 The tricks of daylight thieves, of robbers by night, of night prowlers in the country, the devices of alchemists, frauds[726] of merchants in markets, of artisans in all the crafts, the false pretences of goers to the wars,[727] the swindles of spongers and those intent on making a good living, are endless. Were you to collect (the practitioners of) *jafr*-divination,[728] sorcery, (purveyors of) amulets and poison, their wiles would surely penetrate more among folk, affect and extend further to the deepest parts of the body, enter more deeply into the heart's core, the pia mater (inner membrane of the brain) and the innermost part of the liver. They take indeed a more direct path and more distant objective than the creeping root and the taking after one's father in likeness, even if you were to make stout and lofty walls and take trusty well-contrived locks—were to make narrow exits, palaces and stout gates with sentries taking their spells of duty in rotation, (provided) with the most formidable equipment and (under the) strictest orders, and (if you were to take care) not to proceed with anything most likely to involve damage and bring lasting harm, without your incurring loss in the guarding and your experiencing weariness over the vigilance.

If you open to them as much as the eye of a needle[729] to get at you they will convert it into a well-beaten track and broad highway, so make fast your door, then keep it always shut—nay, keep it locked, for this is more suitable for you. Nay indeed, if you are able to obtain a lock that cannot be opened by anyone but yourself that would be more in consonance with your resolve. If you should have the door blocked up and the lock possible to be opened by you only, they would scale (the door) to get at you from above you. If you should raise its ceiling up to (the star) Capella they would certainly mine (the wall) beneath you to get at you.[730] Abu 'l-Dardā' said: "How fine a cell a believer's house makes." Ibn Sīrīn said: "Seclusion is devotion."

The sweetness of their converse moves (one) to regard (it) as excessive on their part and calls for plying them with rare delicacies for their delectation. This is the sort of thing one of them (the spongers) said to some of his friends: "He ate a she-lamb and drank a leather troughful (of *nabīdh*) then he belched a single (belch) which, had a millstone been connected to it, would have (set it) grinding." Of the same genre is the reply of another character when he visited folk while they were drinking, singing girls with them, and they said: "Propose any tune you like." To

726. There is quite a literature on these frauds in the treatises on *ḥisbah*. One of the earliest of these, almost contemporary with al-Jāḥiẓ, is the 3rd/9th-century manual of al-Utrūsh published in my *Studies in Arabian History and Civilisation*, London, 1981, VII.

727. Old soldiers or men who beg for money on the pretext that they are going to fight, for example, on the frontiers of Byzantium.

728. For *al-jafr* see Appendix 54.

729. Cf. Qur'ān, vii, 39, "Until a camel pass into a needle's eye".

730. They would hollow out the adobe or masonry wall.

which he replied: "I propose a frying-pan's sizzling." Of the same genre is the pronouncement of the Midyanī/Madīnī:[731] "One who breakfasts on seven bananas and bowl of the milk of camels browsing on *rāk*-bushes[732] will belch forth the incense of the Ka'bah." Of the same genre is what they said to some of these
163 (spongers and others) with *khabīṣ*-sweetmeats[733] set in front of them: / "Which is nicer—this or almond-jelly (*fālūdhaj*) or almond-cake (*lawzīnaj*)?"[734] "I do not pronounce judgement on an absentee," he replied. Of the same genre comes Abu 'l-Ḥārith Jummayn's question to one of the kings: "Your Highness (lit. may I be your ransom), please what is in that basket?"[735] "Your mother's clitoris," was his retort. "Let me have a bite at it!" said he. Of the same genre is al-Jārūd b. Abī Sabrah's discourse to Bilāl b. Abī Burdah[736] when the latter said to him: "Describe to me 'Abd al-A'lā[737] and the meals (he offers)." He replied: "The baker comes to him, stands in front of him, and he says: 'What have you got to hand?' and he answers: 'I have such and such a kid,[738] such-and-such a she-kid and such-and-such a duck,' until he comes to the end of all he has to hand," he said. "And what is it that motivates him to do this," asked (Abū Burdah). "So that every man will restrict himself in eating, until he is served the dish his appetite desires, then he takes all he wants of it." "Then what?" he asked, to which he replied: "Then the table is brought in and they expand but he huddles up, they fall to afresh while he affects to excuse himself until, when they have started to flag, he descends on it like a male ostrich and eats like a giant (lit. hungry man) refreshed." A latter-day person said: "I would like a *tharīdah*, dish of shredded bread, moistened with broth, dark with pepper, and a dish of chick-peas with ghee dark with white flecks, along with a couple of sides of meat and a couple of goose wings[739] into which I would dig[740] in the way an orphan in the house of a bad guardian digs!" One of their number was questioned about the parts taken by (various) countries in (devising) food dishes and which of them is attributed to each people and he said: "The Greeks (al-Rūm) have carried off (the prize for) stuffing[741] and soups and Persia for cool

731. Probably Dawsar al-Madīnī/Midyanī *infra*.

732. *Salvadora persica*. See note 61. *Rāk* is said to give milk the best fragrance.

733. For the prepartion of *khabīṣ* see Appendix 32.

734. For *fālūdhaj* see Appendix 47 and for *lawzīnaj*, the origin of the word lozenge, Appendix 55.

735. A *sallah* is a deep basket for transporting fruit, e.g., grapes.

736. The three persons just mentioned are discussed *supra* (p. 62). The first two were witty spongers and Bilāl b. Abī Burdah the notorious qadi whose malicious character al-Jāḥiẓ delineates.

737. 'Abd al-A'lā b. 'Abdullāh b. 'Āmir, described by al-Jāḥiẓ elsewhere as the most eloquent of the people and the most elegant and correct Arabic speaker.

738. 'Awāmirī–Jārim read "a kid of such-and-such", etc. and understand this as including vegetables or rice accompanying the kid.

739. *'Urāq* in Iraqi colloquial Arabic means a goose perhaps served alongside the chick-peas, but 'Awāmirī–Jārim understand it as meaty bones.

740. Or "plunder".

741. *Ḥashw* means seeds used for seasoning food as well as those with which the belly of a lamb is stuffed.

and sweet."[742] 'Umar said: "Persia have *shafāriq*[743] (meat chopped into small pieces and cooked) and sour dishes."[744] Dawsar al-Madīnī said: "We have *harīsah* pastes of meat and flour and pieces of fried meat and bedouin folk have biestings, cooked and strained ghee, locusts, truffles, dough baked in embers in curdled milk, dates with fresh butter." The poet has said:

O for bread clothed in shirt[745] of curdled milk
And horses of dates ridden by butter.

And they have milk with a little fat or ghee poured onto it,[746] thick date-syrup,[747] date-cake[748] and *waṭī'ah*-mix of dates, dried cheese and sugar. A bedouin Arab said:
164 "We were brought wheat like sparrows' mouths / and from it we baked on the fire a dough bread kneaded with olive-oil and the ash began to drop off it little by little in the way the stuffing falls away (from) the girths of a pack-saddle.[749] Then he shredded it (the dough bread) and the shredded bread began to go around in the molten fat like hyenas prowling around in vast expanses of sand. Then he[750] brought us dates (glistening) like the eyes of monitor lizards in which the teeth stick (like mud)." *Sawīq*-gruel (of parched barley or wheat with ghee) was disparaged (in the presence of a bedouin Arab and he said: "Do not disparage it), for it is part of the traveller's equipment, the meal of the man in haste, what sustains the early riser, what suffices the sick, relieves the heat of the melancholy, restores the spirit of the frustrated, excellent for putting on flesh, commended for its goodness. Eaten without seasoning it expels phlegm, mixed with ghee it clears the blood. If you so wish it is (made from) *tharīd*, shredded bread, if you so wish it is (made from) *khabīṣ*-jellied sweetmeat;[751] if you wish it is food, if you wish it is drink." Of one of these gluttons, spongers, lanky, inept and garrulous fellows,[752] he being seen to be stout, it was asked: "What makes you so stout?" "My eating

742. Dozy, I, 68, renders *al-bawārid wa-'l-ḥalwā* as "herbes et drogues rafraîchissantes" and adds that it is applied to various dishes seasoned with vinegar and piquant sauces.

743. *Shafāriq/shabā(at)* is an arabicized form of a Persian word.

744. *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 14, opens with a chapter on "Sour dishes".

745. There is here a play on words: *sirbāl*, a shirt, garment and *sarbalah* shredded bread steeped in gravy, *tharīdah*. Similarly *khayl*, horses, can be read as *khīl*, a date-sprig with its fruit (Landberg, *Ḥaḍramoût*, 569); though this sense does not figure in the classical lexicons it fits the context perfectly and is probably ancient usage. *Barnī* are round yellow dates of good quality; see note 535.

746. The Köprülü MS reads *al-burmah*, a stone pot made of steatite, which 'Awamirī–Jārim suggest may be the name of a dish cooked in it—this seems to me unlikely.

747. It also means ghee clarified by having parched meal or dates thrown into it.

748. See note 302.

749. The pack-saddle is illustrated in Landberg, *Daṯînah*, ii, opp. p. 562—which makes the passage clear. The pad probably lies loosely on top of the hump but comes down as the girth tightens.

750. Note the change of person to "he".

751. See Appendix 32.

752. In Iraqi colloquial Arabic *faqqa'a* (here translated as in the lexicons) means "to belch" which would be appropriate in this context, "a belcher".

hot (foods), drinking cold (drinks), reclining on my left side and my consuming money not my own," he replied. The poet has said:

A full belly brings a lad's[753] name benefits few
Though 'tis fine for the body is certainly true!

To another person it was said: "What made you so fat?" To which he replied: "Little time devoted to thought, but much to ease and going to sleep on a full stomach." Al-Ḥajjāj said to Ghaḍbān al-Qaba'tharī:[754] "What has made you so fat?" "Tether and plenty of fodder",[755] he replied, "and anyone who is the Amir's guest grows fat." It was said to another person: "You *do* have a fine smooth skin." "I eat heart of wheat[756] and young kids; I perfume myself with fresh violets and wear linen," he said.

Wallāhi, if the person begged of were to give, the generosity of the gift would certainly not be commensurate with the ignominy of having to beg. The pivot upon which what is right turns is honest gain and economy in expenditure. Said one of the Arabs: "O Allah, I take refuge in You from part of (Your) providence," when he realized the property (in camels) (he had inherited) had been augmented from the dowry of his mother.[757]

165 What beggar was more importunate and meaner in (his) beggary than al-Ḥuṭay'ah, who meaner and more miserly than Jarīr b. al-Khaṭafī,[758] who more close-fisted than Kuthayyir ('Azzah)[759] and more avaricious than Ibn Harmah?[760] Who would cut through the clouds of dust to reach Ibn Abī Ḥafṣah?[761] Who used

753. Reading *al-fatā* rather than *al-ghinā*.

754. When the Iraqis heard of the appointment of al-Ḥajjāj (note 299) as Umayyad governor of the country al-Qaba'tharī delivered an address in Kufah inciting them against him. This was reported to al-Ḥajjāj on his arrival in Kufah and he imprisoned him for three years.

755. A proverb. *Rat'ah*: abundance of herbage, the comforts of life.

756. i.e. the white part of bread, not the crust.

757. 'Awāmirī–Jārim explain that he takes refuge in Allah because these camels came to him unearned. From the context it seems his father's decease was preceded by that of his mother and his father still owed her the deferred dower (*mu'akhkhar*) which normally is only paid over in the event of divorce.

758. Jarīr b. 'Aṭiyyah b. Ḥudhayfah al-Kalbī al-Yarbu'ī, poet and bitter satirist also known for his tender love poetry, who died in 110/728–29.

759. Kuthayyir b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān of Khuza'ah tribe born in Medina. He is called 'Azzah after his inamorata, a celebrated poet of the Umayyad period of the 'Udhrī school of love poets (*ob.* 105/723). See Ihsan 'Abbas in *EI*^{2}.

760. Ibrāhīm b. 'Alī b. Harmah of the Banū 'l-Ḥārith b. Fihr, a Hijazi poet born under the Umayyads and into the time of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdī. He went on a delegation to the first 'Abbasid Caliph al-Manṣūr. He was not prepossesing in appearance and addicted to *nabīdh* but considered a fine poet in the *badī'*, innovatory style. His *bukhl* is discussed by al-Khatīb, *al Bukhalā'*, 81.

761. Marwān b. Abī Sulaymān b. Yaḥyā b. Abī Ḥafṣah, a poet of the Umayyad and early 'Abbasid eras (*ob.* 181/797–8). He composed a *qaṣīdah* on the last Umayyad Caliph Marwān b. Muḥammad. He went to the 'Abbasid governor of the Yemen Ma'n b. Zā'idah and then prepared to approach the 'Abbasids through a panegyric on the Caliph al-Mahdī and Hārūn al-Rashīd. In his panegyrics he would attack the descendants of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, al-Ṭālibiyyūn.

to warm himself at Abu 'l-'Atāhiyah's[762] fire? Who, in his avarice is the like of Abū Nuwās or Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuraymī in his accurate insight and great earnings? Who slaughtered more fat sheep that never were born than Ibn Harmah, and was more given than al-Khuraymī to thrusting with a spear shaft that had never grown and provided more meals (lit. grain) that had never been sown? What are you (leaving out) in relation to Ibn Yasīr?[763] Where are you leaving Ibn Abī Karīmah? Why do you stop short of mentioning al-Raqāshī,[764] when who is there who doesn't speak of his ill ways?

The bedouin Arab is worse than the settled (Arab)—an almighty beggar, highly impetuous, sycophantic. If he praises he lies, if he lampoons he lies, if in despair he lies, if he covets he lies. Only a suspicious character or a fool approaches him. Only one who loves him gives to him and no one loves him except he be of the same kidney.

How dilatory you are in spending freely on what merits it and how quick you are to spend freely on something useless. If it is poets you prefer and to what they say you refer, the poet has said:

A little money lasts if you treat it with care.
Much money, mismanaged, soon no longer is there.

Al-Shammākh b. Ḍirār[765] has said:

A man's money, handled with care, serving his need,
Than humbly begging, is seemlier far indeed.

Uḥayḥah b. al-Julāḥ[766] said:

Be free or die! Let not a man propertied delude you,
Be he cousin, uncle on your father's or mother's side!
To farming (my lands) al-Zawrā' I shall devote myself.
One generous to (his) tribesfolk is owner of lands wide.

762. Ismā'īl b. al-Qāsim b. Suwayd b. Kaysān Abu 'l-'Atāhiyah, born in Kufah or 'Ayn al-Tamr in 130/748 and died 210/825. His family were *mawālī* of the 'Anazah tribe and engaged in menial occupations. He was "embittered by a sense of social inferiority: in his later verse he gave vent to his hatred of the governing class and the wealthy: he was notorious for his covetousness and meanness to the end of his life" (Guillaume, *EI*[2]). He had a natural gift for poetry. In early life he was associated with a profligate circle of poets but later renounced love-lyrics for ascetic verse. He composed panegyrics on the 'Abbasid Caliphs of his time.

763. A *bakhīl*, see note 97.

764. Al-Faḍl b. 'Īsā al-Raqāshī (see p. 187) noted by al-Jāḥiẓ in *Kitāb al-Bayān* as eloquent, a good speaker and scholastic theologian (*mutakallim*), the head of the Faḍliyyah who take their name from him. He was also a competent qadi.

765. Ma'qal b. Ḍirār b. Sinān of Dhubyān, of a family of poets (*ob.* 11/632–3), called by al-Ḥuṭay'ah, the most gifted poet (*ash'ar*) of Ghaṭafān.

766. A lord (*sayyid*) of the lords of Yathrib and a chief of Aws in the 5th century A.D., making money and miserly with it. He used to deal in usurious sales until he got their properties within his grasp! He had ninety-nine camels drawing water to irrigate his palm plantations! Al-Zawrā' is the name of a well.

166 He also said:

Independent of all near relatives and kinsmen be.
He who's independent of (his) folk a rich man is he!
With composure and with courtesy treat your enemy
As does a man armour-clad against fate, right craftily.
By well-concealed rancorous hatreds be ye not deceived.
Under saddle-cloths a chafed back, bloody, may throb unperceived![767]

Sahl b. Hārūn said:

If a man be too mean to aid me, it is not my way,
And he should see I need him not, to show at all dismay.
Nor will he see me, if by regard for old ties not bound,
Coaxing spurts of milk from him with seductive hissing sound.[768]
For money I ask not, so that thereby I may be freed
So long as asking for 't means that of folk I'd be in need.

Abu 'l-'Atāhiyah said:

While on your friend you're not reliant
His brother you will be, constant;
But when you need him—one instant,
Spit, he will, on you that moment.

Uḥayḥah b. al-Julāḥ said:

Did I but please I'd be serene of mind,
A cup at dawn, or warm fresh milk I'd find,
On rugs, girls flirting with me, dark red lip
From their teeth wine of Zanjabīl[769] I'd sip.
But, in such case, to money born I'd live,
Then mean, withhold it, or generously give.

Another said:

Manage your money well, Abū Muṣliḥ[770]—waste not!
Care in handling it better is than poverty
Don't you see that they should know a man to be rich
Will bring him more respect among his company?

767. The gall of a saddle-sore may not be noticed, but it may yet cause trouble.

768. The metaphor is drawn from the sound *bas bas* the herdsman makes to soothe the she-camel when milking her.

769. Wine of Paradise, name of a fountain in Paradise, an aromatic with which the cups of Paradise are flavoured. See Qur'ān, lxxvi, 16: "And they shall be given to drink therein a cup with which *zanjabīl* is mixed." It is the ordinary word for ginger and from which English "ginger" is derived.

770. *Abā Muṣliḥ aṣliḥ*. There is a play on the theme.

67 'Urwah b. al-Ward said:[771]

Let me strive to become rich for I realize
The needy the most debased of men is, in their eyes,
The furthest removed from their esteem, most despised,
Though his noble birth and virtue be recognized,
In company he is placed on the furthest sides.
His wife despises him, the smallest child derides,
But, puffed up with importance, the rich man you'll find,
Which all but sets him flying, quite out of his mind.
Few are his ill deeds! Yet his ill deeds are many,
But riches are a Lord forgiving all and any.

Sa'īd b. Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nuqayl[772] said:

These my two wives speak falsehoods. What they say
Is lies directed at me, shame this day.
Seeing the little I have, it's divorce
They demand. You've set me a hateful course.
Money in plenty I'll, maybe, have yet,
My back relieved of its burden of debt.
Slaves of mine will be seen and silver coin,[773]
Of serving men—ten to them I shall join.
Luxury! Flaunting the train to their gown,
They'll (fem.) say, "Now for ever your staff lay down."[774]
Alas, it seems the man of property
Is loved—the needy lives in poverty,
Kept out of secrets by one who confides,
But the monied man's brought secrets he hides.

Another said:

Of me, money owns part I throw not away,
A part of me is owned by indolence and play!

Al-Akhnas b. Shihāb[775] said:

771. 'Urwah b. al-Ward al-'Absī was a poet of the "Ignorance" and one of its cavaliers. He was a "vagabond (*ṣu'lūk*) poet; the "vagabonds" were outlaws unable to fit into their particular tribal organization. Rather a "Robin Hood" character, he would make raiding forays and distribute his booty among the sick, elderly and weak (*ḍa'īf*) in famine years and make shelters for them. Those who recovered would raid with him. In the 'Abbasid period he became a legendary hero around whom many tales were woven.

772. A Companion of the Prophet born in Mecca who migrated to Medina where he ultimately died in 51/671. He was one of the ten of the Prophet's followers of whom he foretold that they would go to Paradise.

773. *Awāq-in*, lit. ounces; silver will be meant, but whether actual coin is an open question.

774. "Your staff lay down" seems to mean—give up travelling to gain a livelihood.

775. A poet and cavalier of the age of "Ignorance", a noble of Banū Taghlib who died about seven years before the *hijrah*.

Long did I live with youths, by love beguiled.
I kept their company, my brothers wild.
Borrowings of youth I have now repaid,
Owner of property, its guardian staid!

168 Ibn al-Dhi'bah al-Thaqafī[776] said:

The self[777] I did obey in all that its lusts crave
Till it turned me a despised bondsman of a slave.
When to it I come when I've sold (my crop) of dates
It kisses, embraces, says "Your ransom (from fates)."
Whoever comes to wealth let him make it remain
His store, and keep ever toiling on with might and main.

And he said:

One who amasses money but in return, gives no wise,
But upon keeping last year's crop for his drought year relies,
Folk hold contemptible, in the way his dog they despise.

It has been said in the words of the proverb: "Toil before you stretch yourself." Laqīṭ[778] said: "Foray makes the the milch-camel yield more milk and makes weapons keener." Ibn al-Mu'āfā said:

His daughter, Sloth married to Incapacity
And to her, when he married her, gave as dowry
A soft love-couch. To her he then said: "Lie thee down,
You two can, at the most, but beget Poverty!"

'Uthmān b. Abi 'l-'Āṣ said: "(Devote) a time to your Hither world and a time to your Hereafter." The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said: "I forbid you tittle-tattle,[779] inquisitiveness and squandering money." He (also) said: "The best alms-giving is that which (still) leaves wealth (in hand), the upper hand is better than the lower hand and charity begins in the home."[780] The Apostle of Allah (also) said: "A third plus a third is a lot.[781] To leave your children rich is better than that they stretch out their hands to folk for charity." Ibn 'Abbās said:
169 "I should like folk / to make it somewhat less than a third because of the Prophet's,

776. Rabī'ah b. Dhi'bah (Dhi'bah being the name of his mother), his father being Yālil . . . b. Qasiyy b. Munabbih of Thaqīf. He was a cavalier of the age of "Ignorance". These verses have been accredited to other poets.

777. Ibn Qutaybah reads *al-'irs*, the wife, and another possible reading for *'adhqān*, rendered "crop of dates" in line 3, is *'itqān*, honours. "Your ransom" means "May I be your ransom", an address of respect.

778. Laqīṭ b. 'Abd al-Qays al-Fazārī, an ally of the Supporters (al-Anṣār), amir of a squadron at the Battle of Yarmūk against the Byzantines.

779. Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Yukrah la-kum qīl wa-qāl*, "Tittle-tattle is disapproved for you".

780. The upper hand is that which bestows a gift and the lower, the hand that receives it. Charity begins in the home—lit. "Begin with those whom thou sustainest".

781. Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, see note 343.

on him be peace, saying: 'A third plus a third is a lot.' " The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, (also) said: "It is sin enough for a man to let those whom it is his duty to maintain perish." Yet that I should beggar myself through enriching others you consider to be liberality and renown, and that I should look after the dependants of others at the expense of ruining my own! On this theme Ibn Harmah said:

Like (an ostrich) leaving her eggs in the open desert,
Covering the eggs of another (ostrich) with her wing.[782]

Another said:

Like him who amid his nearest kin, discord doth incite,
While, as peace-maker between others, he acts to unite.
In this he has not conformed with the law of what is right.

Another said:

As a woman suckling another's sons neglects her own,
A profitless ploy with her—never a patch has she sewn![783]

Allah, blessed and exalted is He, said: "And squander not wastefully, for the squanderers were the brethren of the satans," and He said: "And they will ask you what they should spend (in charity). Say—the abundant and redundant."[784] He allowed the "abundant and redundant", but he did not allow of what imposes hardship. He allowed surpluses (to a man's requirements) but he did not allow things basic (to them). Ka'b b. Mālik[785] wanted to donate his property in charity but the Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said: "Hold on to your money for yourself." The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, is preventing him from putting out his money in charity while you command him to spend it in extravagance and squandering! Ghaylān b. Salamah[786] divested himself of all his property but 'Umar compelled him to take it back, saying (to him): "If you were to die I would stone your tomb in the way Abū Righāl's[787] tomb is stoned." Allah, Almighty and noble is His name, said: "Let the affluent man spend of his plenty and let him whose sustenance is limited spend from what Allah has

782. The ostrich is proverbial for stupidity. They say: "Stupider than the ostrich".

783. The sense is that she did not do a thing!

784. Qur'ān, xvii, 26 and ii, 218.

785. Ka'b b. Mālik al-Khazrajī, of the Supporters (al-Anṣār) and a poet engaged in political versifying on behalf of the Prophet as well as taking part in his battles. He belonged to a family of poets. He died about 50/670.

786. A pre-Islamic poet of Thaqīf, one of the judges of the Qays tribe, who became a Muslim at the taking of al-Ṭā'if. He is said to have gone to the court of Chosroes on an embassy.

787. Tradition states that "we went with him (the Prophet) to al-Ṭā'if and passed by a grave, and he said: 'This is the grave of Abū Righāl. He was the ancestor (*abū*) of Thaqīf, and was of Thamūd. He was in this *ḥaram* (sacred enclave) defending it and when he came out of it the vengeance that befell his people befell him in this place and he was buried in it.' " His grave is stoned up to the present time.

given him."[788] The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said: "What takes you
170 to the place is sufficient for you,"[789] / and he said: "A little that suffices is better than a lot that distracts." Allah, blessed and exalted is He, said: "And those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor niggardly but keep to the mean."[790] The Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said: "The man unable to continue his journey because his camel has perished from fatigue traverses no territory and spares not a camel back."[791] Allah, exalted is His name, said: "And let not your hand be chained to your neck nor put it forth so fully that you sit reproached and destitute."[792] It is on account of this therefore that they said: "The best of your property is what benefits you, the best of matters are those in the middle place (between two extremes), the worst pace is incessant (riding) till a beast breaks down, and a good deed lies between two evil ones."[793] They said: "The religion of Allah (has its place) between him who has shortcomings and the extremist." They said, proverbially: "The archer aims between the two." They said: "You should aim at sufficient for your needs and moderation, neither too little nor too much." "Between fat livestock", they said, "and lean." They said: "Don't be so sweet that you're swallowed nor so bitter that you're spat out." They said, proverbially: "Quenching thirst doesn't mean drinking to the last drop." They said: "You tying the knot—think of (how to) undo (it)!" They said: "Sipping is more effective in quenching a thirsty man's thirst." They said: "A little that lasts is more than a lot that comes interrupted." Abu 'l-Dardā' said: "I relax myself with a touch of vanity for dislike of so burdening it with reality that it will find it tedious." The poet said:

I am sweet-natured, truly.
Bitterness overcomes me
And I am refractory
But I am not unruly.

They said, in criticism of the good manager (*muṣliḥ*) and reproach of the economical person: "An avaricious person is more to be excused than an unjust one." They (also) say: "Haste to censure is unfair," and "Perhaps he has an excuse of which you are not aware," and "Many a person who blames (others) is himself to blame." Al-Aḥnaf said: "Many a person who is blamed is innocent of any misdeed," and "Giving to a beggar excites (his) cupidity[794] and giving to an importunate fellow is complicity with him (in his importuning)." The Prophet,
171 Allah bless and honour him, said: "Only in three (cases) / is begging right—

788. Qur'ān, lxv, 7.
789. This is also attributed to Aktham b. Ṣayfi in his harangue before Chosroes.
790. Qur'ān, xxv, 67. i.e. be generous but not over-generous.
791. Said of a person over-zealous in trying to achieve a thing.
792. Qur'ān, xvii, 29. By "so fully", "so bountifully" is meant.
793. These are sometimes quoted as proverbs.
794. Lit. makes him addicted, habituated to (as one makes a dog accustomed to the hunt).

degrading poverty, an awkward debt and a grievous blood[795] (obligation)." The poet[796] said:

The free-born is denounced and the stick's for the slave.
Naught but refusal meets the importunate knave.

They said: "When begging is persistent, the refusal is (correspondingly) persistent", and "Beware of giving to persons who have been swindled and spending freely on those who have been defrauded, for a man who has been swindled is neither commended nor rewarded (by Allah)." They said on this account: "Do not be the nearer of the two wild asses to the arrow." He says: "When you give beggars your money your vital parts become more exposed to your foes than theirs." They said: "Flight with a scabbard-cover is craftier."[797] Abu 'l-Aswad (al-Du'alī) said: "It is no part of honour to expose yourself to humiliation nor part of liberality that you invite degradation." Anyone who lets money go from his hand will be impoverished and anyone impoverished must humble himself and humbleness is degradation. If generosity (*jūd*) be the uterine brother of liberality (*karam*), disdainful refusal has a better claim to nobility.[798] The ancient said: "O Allah, do not stir up evil water for me so that I become an evil man." The poet has said:

Step forth with fate when it paces
And run with it when it races.

The latter-day (poet) has said:

Would I had sandals, a pair, of hyena-hide.
Bare lacerated feet will cast no shoe aside.[799]

Truly has (spake the speaker) who said: "A man in need forgives and a man seeking repayment is forbearing." To Decimus[800] they said: "Do you eat in the

795. *Dam mūjiʿ*. One who assumes "a blood-wit which causes pain" is a man who takes upon himself the responsibility for a blood-wit and exerts himself (to find the money or camels, etc.) for it, to pay to the relatives of the man slain, but if the man who has taken on the responsibility does not pay it, the person for whom he assumed responsibility is slain, and his killing causes the former pain/sadness.

796. Bashshār b. Burd, a famous Iraqi poet of the 2nd/8th century, of *mawlā* descent and with leanings to the Shuʿūbiyyah. He was born and flourished in Basra. See *EI*^{2}.

797. The story is told of Jābir b. ʿAmr al-Muzanī that he saw the tracks of two men and, being a seer, he realized that they were potentially dangerous and uttered this dictum, meaning it is better to escape with the scabbard-cover at least, if the sword is lost. The *qirāb* can also mean the bag containing one's provisions. Probably simply the scabbard is meant here.

798. Explained as—the generous man should not humble himself but stick to disdainful refusal which can only be preserved by keeping a watch over his money (ʿAwāmirī–Jārim).

799. Al-Maydānī interposes a hemistich between these two lines: And thongs (made from) the upper part of the chest (of the the hyena) which do not break. The verses are said to be of Jassās b. Qutayb. A variant for chest is *ist*, anus.

800. Pellat, *Le Kitāb at-Tarbiʿ wa-t-Tadwīr de Gāḥiẓ*, 46, suggests that Decimus is the 3rd-century A.D. Zosimus of Panopolis, author of alchemical works known to the Arabs under this corrupted form of his name. Stories attributed to him or sayings figure in a number of places in the literature.

172 market-place?" "If Decimus feels hungry in the market-place / he eats in the market-place," he retorted. He (Ṣa'ṣa'ah b. Ṣawḥān)[801] said: "One who suffers from drought goes out a-foraging and one who is hungry becomes humble," and he said: "Be on your guard against prosperity's taking fright and fleeing, for it is timid, given to taking flight—not every bolter is returned nor every runaway given up." 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib said: "Rarely does anything retreat then advance." They said: "Taking the frequent bite for whole meals destroys appetite and many an action hastily taken causes delay," and they found fault with him who said: "One glorious meal and death!"[802] They said (also): "Do not look for the shadow after the substance."[803] They said: "Do not be like someone whose self gets the better of him, despite what he suspects, but who does not get the better of it, despite that of which he is certain." So take a look as to how you pay out a dirham and why you are paying it out. They said: "Worse than the loss of things dear to one is the anguish that follows." The poet[804] said:

If the blow befallen you be great
'Tis far worse you are disconsolate.

That you should become impoverished through the incidence of a destructive calamity is surely better for you than becoming impoverished through a misdemeanour committed (by you). The man who is (himself) the cause of losing his wealth will not be short of a sigh for himself, reproach from others, small pity and much malicious joy (on their part) accompanied by devastating ill deeds and shame on the (poor) fellow.

'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb alluded to the youth of Quraysh, their extravagant spending and rivalry in squandering (their substance), saying: "Truly the way (any) one of them behaves is of more concern to me than his (becoming) poor."[805] He used to say: "Making a needy man free of want is easier for me than reforming an immoral one."

Do not be of more ill omen for yourself than Khawta'ah[806] and of more ill omen for your people than al-Basūs,[807] and for your tribe than the perfume of Manshim.[808] Anyone who allows his lustings to have the mastery of his money and his fancies

801. See p. 137.

802. See p. 97, and note 430.

803. A proverbial saying—do not abandon something you have and then look for it after it has gone. For a legend about the origin of the saying see Appendix 56.

804. In *al-Ḥayawān* this verse is attributed to Ṣāliḥ b. 'Abd al-Quddūs.

805. Ibn al-Athīr, *Nihāyah*, explains this as—the lack of a skill of any one.

806. Khawta'ah of Banū Ghufaylah.

807. Al-Basūs was a lady of Banū Bakr. The camel of a client of hers was killed by the Lord of the powerful confederation of Taghlib. This gave rise to the famous war of al-Basūs, described in detail by R.A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, 55–60, which lasted some forty years.

808. There are many variations of the legend behind this proverb. She was either the wife or the daughter of 'Uṭāridah of Hamdān. She used to sell perfumes and when they wanted to do battle and perfumed themselves with her scent the fighting grew keener and many were slain.

become arbiter of what he owns will come to regret it—and let him blame only himself. So good luck to you when you can find a man of high ethical standing through whom you may benefit. One of the poets said:

All tribes, I see, defend their honour[809] as they ought,
But, of honour to defend, wine-bibbers have naught.
(You're) their brother while the cup with them passes round,
Then fellowship wears thin and all so bored are found!
Speaking not in ignorance, this I do declare,
For, of the dissolute I'm very well aware.

173 This trait was most prevalent among *nabīdh*-drinkers, but today folk are much of a muchness. Al-Aḍbaṭ b. Quray'[810] said, when he moved around the tribes but they proved poor protectors after he had been wronged by Banū Sa'd: "In every wadi there are Banū Sa'd."

Stick to my words and leave aside what Abu 'l-'Āṣ has said. Stick to the words of the man who said: "Pasture (your camels) at night and do not be negligent",[811] and the words of the man who said: "Seek not the shadow after the substance has departed", and the words of the man who said: "Fill your water-jar from the first water-skin", and "Leave that about which you are dubious for that about which you are in no dubiety." Your brother is he who speaks the truth to you[812] and who comes to you in consideration of your intelligence, not in consideration of your desire, and your brother is he who assumes the task of offering you sincere advice for your well-being, from whose reproaches in time to come you will not be immune. Another said:

He who does not deceive you is your brother true,
He who injures himself to be of help to you.

'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ[813] has said:

And know ye full well! Be ye sure and certain
From one not of ye, hope ye cannot entertain.

You will continue to prosper so long as you have in yourself one to admonish

809. Arabic *ḥarīm*, things in defence of which one fights. Wine in the following line is *nabīdh*.

810. Of Banū 'Awf b. Sa'd, poet and cavalier of the "Ignorance". He is said to have founded the city of Ṣan'ā'. He attacked the Banū 'l-Ḥārith b. Ka'b, killed, took captive, cut off noses and castrated! He built a tower-house and kings built Ṣan'ā' around it. This seems largely legendary. Banū Sa'd b. Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm are his tribe.

811. Said to a man who wanted to cross a desert with his camels by night, relying on what pasture he might find en route. The proverb advises caution and careful management.

812. i.e. is sincere with you.

813. 'Abīd b. al-Abraṣ of Asad (the man whose skin is affected by "white leprosy") a celebrated pre-Islamic poet, a contemporary of Hujr, Prince of Kindah, father of the Imru'u 'l-Qays, the most famous of all pre-Islamic poets. The little known of his life can be found in Sir Charles Lyall's edition and translation of the *Dīwān* in the Gibb Memorial Series. This fragment appears only in *al-Bukhalā'*.

you, and, in your mind, an eye watching over your natural propensities or something that acts as a sincere brother and vizier to you, proffering candid advice. A good wife is a genuine help, and fortunate is the man who takes a telling from others. If you are not endowed with a single one of these assets a grievous disaster must inevitably befall you with a lasting effect and resulting in a reputation that sticks to you. For this reason they said: "The best part of your money is that which benefits you", and "Any money that teaches you a lesson is not lost."[814]

Money is hankered and sought after in ocean deeps, on mountain tops, dense growth of marshlands, sought in rugged uplands as in flat plains; valley bottoms and highways; the eastern and western extremities of the Earth are all one in quest of it. It is pursued with honour and abasement, with loyalty and treachery, with piety as it is with gross immorality,[815] with truth and with lying. It is pursued with
174 obscenity / and with flattery. No device or spell is neglected—even to the extent of pursuing it through denial of Allah as it is pursued with belief (in Him) and it is pursued with folly as with sagacity. In every place they have set nets for it and traps in every flood-course. One who will be satisfied with nothing less than success has pursued you; one who will not sleep till he is relieved of it has conceived an envy of you. A seeker after blood vengeance may calm down and the man (whose blood is demanded) may do also, but a covetous man will never desist!

It is said that there is no medium-sized town, far remoteness nor any of the ends of the Earth but you come on a Medinan, Basran and Ḥīrah man there. And (there) you may perceive the look of the sullen hatred of the poor for the rich, the quickening of the appetites of monarchs, the hatred of the man on foot for the rider and the universal envy between folk of different sorts. So if you do not practise wariness, take your share of the bucket, learn discretion, sit with the exponents of economy, acquaint yourself with changes of fortune—and your own in particular—picturing to yourself the (possible) alterations so as to imagine yourself poor and destitute, until you suspect your left hand of trying to do down your right and your hearing of trying to do down your sight; and no one is more suspect to yourself than the person on whom you rely, no one upon whom it is more advisable to maintain a watch than a person loyal to you. You will be utterly ravished and plundered, and they will make your money melt away, encroaching on it little by little, bringing a wasting disease on it and not giving it treatment.

175 They have said: "A person who possesses money, even if he is stupid, tries to recover the rest of it, so do not be inferior in any way to that stupid fellow." They said: "A clever woman is never without wool to spin so in no way be inferior to that woman." The ancient said of money lost over which the desires of the family were allowed to take control: "They have no shepherd but are allowed to pasture at will." Your money is not money conserved from (nibbling) teeth so that it is said of it: "A pasture without a sheep reared on it and grazing herbage without a

814. This proverb figures in Aktham b. Ṣayfī's testament to his son.

815. *Fatk* also means "assassination".

camel."[816] The most you can do, with prudent management (*iṣlāḥ*), is that it will have the ability to fill your belly, protect those you are in duty bound to protect[817] and meet any eventualities that come your way. Money does not last if not well looked after and if it is being constantly milked. So be wise to your affairs and to the fore in protecting your money, for he who protects his money is protecting the two noblest things—which are the faith and honour. It has been said: "The arrow is surely feathered for shooting[818] and in butting, the nanny-goat with the (longest?) horn wins."[819] When the Arabs saw a sponger fall in with an inexperienced man they said: "It is not your job / to weave him so drag and tear."[820] The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said: "People, all of them, are the same, like the teeth of a comb and through his brother(s) one man (becomes) many." You will have no benefit from companionship of a man who does not have the same regard for you as he has for himself.

Make yourself familiar with your companions' natures and the qualities of those with whom you hobnob and if they are of this description employ discretion (with them) and if they are the opposite of that you will act in accordance with it.

I charge you to do only what the Qur'ān charges you to do and recommend you do as the Apostle of Allah recommended you and admonish you (to behave) only as the upright admonished one another (to behave). The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said: "Hobble the she-(camel) with the rope and trust (in Allah)." Muṭarrif b. Shikhkhīr[821] said: "Any man who sleeps under a leaning cliff, resolved to trust to (Allah), let him throw himself from a height, resolved to trust to (Allah)." Where then is that self-protection which Allah[822] has commanded, where is the exposure of oneself to danger which He forbade? Anyone who is desirous of safety without taking precautions (for it) is making desire vain. Allah fulfils a desire only when it is for what He has commanded and He only realizes hopes, the (prime) cause of which He is. 'Umar fled from the plague and Abū 'Ubaydah[823] said to him: "Are you fleeing from the decree of Allah?" "Yes," he

816. The sheep being fattened for eating. The proverb is applied to a man who does not consume his money.

817. e.g. your wife, property, neighbours.

818. A proverb "Before shooting the arrow is feathered", i.e. your weapon should be in readiness before you actually need to use it.

819. The proverb alludes to the victory of the prepared over the unprepared.

820. Drag—as by the tail ('Awāmirī–Jārim). Al-Maydānī's *iṣhab wa-jurr*, "drag and pull" seems a better reading. Al-Ḥājirī reads *iṣhaq*, pound.

821. Al-Ḥarashī, of the generation following the Prophet (*ob.* 95/713–4), of Banū 'Amir b. Ṣa'ṣa'ah, of Basrah, a *qāṣṣ*, story-teller (cf. note 29) of an early type whose tales were intended to promote religious sentiment.

822. Perhaps the allusion is to Qur'ān, lxvi, 6: "O you who believe protect yourselves and your families from (Hell)-Fire."

823. 'Amir b. 'Abdullāh b. al-Jarrāḥ of Quraysh, an outstanding Companion of the Prophet and famous leader (*ob.* 18/639) who fought in many early engagements of Islam.

replied, "to the decree of Allah!"[824] He was asked: "Is it is any avail to take precaution against predestination (lit., (Allah's) decree)?" To which he made reply: "If precautions were of no avail, (Allah's) command (to take them) would be futility." Making one's excuse known (so as to be absolved afterwards) is trust (in Allah). The Apostle of Allah, Allah bless and honour him, said to a man who, in the course of a law-suit, said: "Allah suffices me": "Make your excuses to Allah and when a thing is beyond you, say: 'Allah suffices me'." The poet said:

He who like me, with dependents, is become indigent,
His wealth departed, casts about himself, many a way
To exonerate himself, or, on his need, becomes intent.
Who brings his self to excuse him has achieved all he may.

Another said:

If the qadi decides unjustly and undue
Then affairs for which I blame not myself ensue.

176 Zuhayr al-Bābī[825] said: "If reliance on Allah be that, whenever I put out money I shall be certain of getting something in return for it and putting what I get in return back into my purse and that, whenever I am not looking after it, it will be kept safe, I call upon you to testify that I have never relied (on Allah)! Reliance (on Allah) is simply that you know that when you keep to action meritorious (in the sight of) Allah you come and go in (His) grace, rewarded for this either in the present life or the Hereafter." Then he said: "Why did Abū Bakr engage in trading, and why did 'Umar and 'Uthmān and al-Zubayr and 'Abd al-Raḥmān?[826] And why did 'Umar instruct people to trade and how they should buy and sell? Why did 'Umar say: 'If you buy a camel make it a hefty one and if testing[827] won't sell it, its looks will?' Why did 'Umar say:[828] 'Distribute (things susceptible to) and the (disasters of) fate and make your head (of sheep) two head'? Why did 'Uthmān say, when questioned about the large profits he made: 'I was never deflected from a profit?' Why do they say: 'Don't buy (at any price) a worn-out beast or one with a vice.'[829] Did 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib restrain his nephew Ja'far from anything except putting out his money on something not worth it and giving it away for some whim of his? Was that for any other reason than looking for a good name in quest of gratitude? Did anyone suggest he spent on wines and gambling, on low pursuits and debauchery? Was it for aught else than for that which they dub generosity and

824. The fate Allah has decreed, predestination.

825. Zuhayr b. Nu'aym al-Bābī of Bāb al-Abwāb/Darband the port on the Caspian Sea.

826. The first three Caliphs. Al-Zubayr b. al-'Awāmm was the maternal cousin of the Prophet and a famous personality in early Islam. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf al-Zuhrī is another famous character, a Companion and a man of wealth. Abū Bakr, 'Uthmān and 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf used to sell cloth, while 'Umar used to come and go in commerce.

827. Camels in *Qānūn Ṣan'ā'* are tested for cud-chewing and wind (*Ṣan'ā'*, 191).

828. Repeated from p. 11.

829. *'Ayb* and *shayb*, rhyming cliché of the market.

consider liberality? He who thinks to restrain the liberal because of their liberality thinks to restrain the clement because of their clemency. And what imam do you want after Abū Bakr, which forbear would you take as a paragon after ʿAlī?

"How can we hope for good faith, maintenance of the right, fortitude in adversity, in a glutton, a sponger, a deceitful sycophant, one with an insatiable lust for food, voracious, with never a scruple how he acquires a dirham, whence he gets a dinar, taking no heed of a kindness, not caring that he is insatiable, resented, without a scruple when he is eating, how this came to be food, and what the verdict on it is (lawful or unlawful). If you have not much money it goes only to support your family; if you have a lot, set the extra aside against adversities befalling you. Only a misguided individual feels safe from (what) days (may bring), only a negligent person is deluded by safety. So be on the watch for tribulations that come knocking (on your door) at night and wives of cunning men. Your ghee is in your relish.[830] The lean you have is better than the fat of somebody else—if you've got it—and how much more so when spears keen and stout doors intervene."

177 To one of the Arabs a woman said: "If you marry me I shall provide for you," and he composed (these lines), saying:

If I have but your money, poverty and shame
Will befall me, be lost my reward, my good name.
What good is it to folk when its profit isn't theirs
And the shaykh of the tribe commands not his affairs.

Al-Maʿlūṭ al-Qurayʿī[831] said:

Abū Hāni', don't beg of folk, but beseech Allah to hide (your shame).
With both your hands beseech—Allah's bounty is wide.
But, were you to ask of folk a little dust to provide,
When you say: "Give", they will all but refuse, and turn aside.

178 ## *A Miscellany of Eccentricities*

Now let the narrative revert to the tales of misers and their odd quirks and discourse.

Ibn Ḥassān said: "With us there was a poor man with a rich brother, an exceedingly miserly person much given to boasting (of his wealth). One day his

830. Cf. Lane, *Lexicon*, 36: "Their ghee is in their seasoned food" interpreted by him as meaning their food or wealth returns to them. But compare modern Egyptian colloquial: "*Zayt-nā fi daqīq-nā*", "Our olive-oil is in our flour", i.e., "We do not squander or give our property away—we keep it in the family." A parallel Syrian saying is "*Samn-uh fi akl-uh*", "His ghee is in his food".

831. Al-Maʿlūṭ b. Badl al-Qurayʿ al-Saʿdī, an Islamic poet whose few extant verses are of bedouin style.

brother said to him: 'Confound you, I am a poor man with a large household to feed and you are rich with a small household to maintain. Yet you do not give me any assistance against (ill) fortune or give me some of your money adequate for my needs, or part with anything for me. *Wallāhi*, I have never seen or heard of a more miserly person than you.' 'Confound *you*,' he replied. 'Things are not as you suppose nor money as you reckon. Nor am I, as you aver, by way of being a miser nor in easy circumstances. *Wallāhi*, did I possess a million dirhams I certainly would give you five hundred thousand dirhams of them. You there, is a man who gives away five hundred thousand dirhams to be called a miser?' "

But with regard to the man who offers a dish of *tharīd* shredded bread, black (with ghee) and white, I do not admire the motley colour (black and white) of his *tharīdah* dish and the rest of what would appear on his table as much as I admire one thing and how he managed it, restricted and retained the mastery over it, despite being much given to tales and (all) manner of (theological-philosophical) propositions. This, despite the frequent occasions I have spent sitting with him and the wide varieties of tales he would tell, is that I never noticed him tell of a man giving one single dirham to another. He would discourse at random on discretion and resolution, understanding and learning, on all topics, with never an allusion to generosity—never did I hear this noun from him! From his tongue this category was absent—just as it was absent from his heart.

What Ṭāhir al-Asīr told me of him confirms what I have said about him, for he remarked: "Among things that demonstrate that, of all peoples, the Byzantine Greeks are the most avaricious is the fact that in their language you find no noun for generosity." He would say: "People give a name only to what they need to use—when they do not require (a word) the need to bother about it drops." Folk have averred that a thing pointing to the deceit of the Persians is that there is not a single noun in their language for sincere, honest advice (*naṣīḥah*) comprehending the whole of the senses conveyed by this noun (in Arabic). When (in Arabic) one says "*naṣīḥah*", "integrity (*ṣalaḥ*) of heart" is not its (sole) meaning, for it may be
179 that a man / will be of honest (*salīm*) heart but no reason occurs for him for him to seek to advise you on what, as he sees it, in your case, will be more advantageous to you and a way to benefit you. There is in their language a noun for integrity (*salāmah*) and a noun for benevolent intent, sound advice and your assuming responsibility for (tendering) correct (advice). They do have various nouns to express (Arabic) *naṣīḥah* which, when combined, denote what a single noun does in the language of the Arabs. So anyone who, from this angle, delivers judgement against them of deceitfulness has done them injustice.

Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-'Azīz[832] told me, saying: "I took the midday meal with Rāshid al-A'war (the One-eyed) and they brought us a bowl of mullet of the Salt Marshes

832. Perhaps Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām, a story of whose al-Jāḥiẓ recounts in *al-Ḥayawān*, iii, 451, a scholastic theologian (*mutakallim*), perhaps a Mu'tazilite and a man of rank of al-Ahwāz.

(al-Sabkhah)[833] called *darrāj* and I began to take one, cut its head off, laying it to the side, then split it in two down its belly, take out the back and rib bones, laying them to the side, throwing away the contents of its belly, the tail and fin parts. Then I would collect it up in one mouthful and eat it. Rāshid would take a mullet, cut it in two pieces, each of which he made into one mouthful, without throwing away head or tail. He kept his patience with me for several mouthfuls and when he reached the end of it he said: 'My boy, when you eat a meal eat the good with the bad!' "

(He went on): "And he would way: 'I only ever enjoyed eating dates with Negroes (Zanj)[834] and Isfahan folk. In the case of the Negro he doesn't (pick and) choose but I (pick) and choose; in the case of the Isfahani he grabs a fistful, eating of it only, just looking at what is in front of him until he has finished. This is fair—(picking) and choosing is disgusting,[835] outrageous. Inevitably the dates left over won't be any good to the family if there has been a (picker) and chooser (at them) beforehand.' He would say: 'It is not good manners for your hand to roam over the (palm-)basket tray—it's just dates and what lies within reach.' "

Sariyy b. Mukarram, he being brother to Mūsā b. Janāḥ, averred, saying: "Mūsā used to command us not to eat as long as one of us was engaged in drinking water and asking for it. When he perceived we were not complying
180 with him he called / one night for water, then drew a line with his finger in a rice dish set in front of us, saying: 'This is my portion—don't start on it so that I may enjoy a drink of water.' "

And (there are) other tales about him[836] in the earlier part of the book, this being one of their number.

Al-Makkī said to some of those who used to dine and breakfast with al-Bāsiyānī: "Confound you! How *can* you swallow his food when you hear him say: 'We feed you for the sake of Allah only; we seek of you neither recompense nor gratitude.'[837]

833. The *sabkhah*, salt marsh at the top of the Persian Gulf is described in Le Strange, *Lands*, 48. The *biyāh* is identified from Jayakar's partial translation of al-Damīrī's *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān* and Lorimer, who also records the *dārijah*, a dark green fish which seems to be a variant of the name *darrāj*, but Lorimer's *bayyāh* is white. A jingle tells us that:

Many a shaykh of the Banū Rabāh
When his belly is filled with the *biyāh*
Gives vent at night to a dreadful groan *āḥ*!

A member of the 'Abbasid house, 'Īsā b. Sulaymān was lampooned for owning reservoirs of *biyāh* fish which he would sell and an estate known as the Daliyah (plot of land) of 'Īsā from which he would sell vegetables and sweet basil (*rayāḥīn*) (al-Ḥajarī). These were unbecoming activities in a nobleman.

834. In the marsh area between Basrah and Wāsiṭ called al-Baṭā'iḥ, with a population including Negroes imported from Africa and Zuṭṭ, a people originating from Sind.

835. Syrians say: "*Akl-uh muqarrif*", "The (way) he eats is disgusting", referring to bad habits in eating; cf. Egyptian *muqrif*.

836. p. 115.

837. Qur'ān, lxxvi, 9, also quoted in connection with al-Bāsiyānī on p. 38.

Then you perceive him reciting it just when you are at dinner, and reciting no other verse. *Wallahi*, you are the complete opposite of (the poet) who said:

The milk of Ta'illah ibn Musāwir's[838] camels,
While he owns them, to me forbidden is indeed,
And so too is the food of 'Imrān ibn Awfā
As long as entering men's bellies, food doth feed.
Those down whose throats slips easily such fare bestowed
Them as a favour, mean men are they, 'tis agreed."

(He said):[839] "So whenever you marvel, marvel at fifty men of the Arabs, headed by Abū Rāfi' al-Kilābī, a bawdy poet, breakfasting with Abū 'Uthmān al-A'war! For me to breakfast on the food of a Christian is worse than breakfasting on the food of a Muslim who recites the Qur'ān and speaks the truth."[840]

181 Abu 'l-Manjūf al-Sadūsī[841] told me, saying: "I was with my father, we being accompanied by a shaykh of the clients[842] of the tribe, and we passed by a field crop guard over the canal of al-Ubullah. We were tired and so sat down beside him. He was not long in bringing us a palm-basket tray of ripe *sukkar*-dates[843] and black *jaysuwān*-dates and set it down in front of us. The shaykh who was accompanying us ate but when I saw my father did not eat (any) I did not eat, much as I wanted to do so. The field guard turned to my father and said: 'Why don't you eat?' '*Wallāhi*,' he replied, 'I find them appetising but I don't think the proprietor of the land has given you permission to give folk (such) choice dates to eat. If you were to bring us some *shuhrīz*[844]-dates and *barnī*-dates we certainly would eat.' Our client, who was a very aged man, remarked: 'Well, I never gave any thought to such a thing as this.' "

Al-Makkī said: "Ismā'īl b. Ghazwān went into the mosque to pray and found the row (of those at prayer) full, but felt unable to stand by himself, so he plucked at the clothes of a shaykh in the row to step back to stand alongside him. When the shaykh stepped back and Ismā'īl saw the space he left he stepped forward and stood in the shaykh's place, leaving the shaykh standing behind him, (cursing him), invoking Allah against him."

Thumāmah[845] used to avoid letting anyone with whom he was not on familiar

838. Al-Mubarrad reads this name as Musātir. The verses are by a tribesman of Banū Tamīm.

839. The narrator appears to be one of those dining with al-Bāsiyānī.

840. Explained as meaning that to breakfast with a Christian like Abū 'Uthmān al-A'war (the One-eyed), even if he treats his guests well, is shaming but this is not so with a Muslim like al-Bāsiyānī ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

841. A 2nd-century historian and genealogist of Basrah.

842. Probably the Aramean cultivators etc. organized as a group, subject to an Arab tribe. *Nāṭūr*, field crop guard, is an Aramaic word.

843. *Sukkar* is a high quality ripe date. *Jaysuwān/jaysurān* is the same: Persian *kaysurān* meaning hanging clusters, eaten green and red and when it becomes soft (*ruṭb*) it goes bad. Another source says at the yellow stage it is better than when it turns black.

844. *Suhrīz/shihrīz/shuhrīz*, a kind of Basrah date.

845. Thumāmah b. Ashras, p. 14, Appendix 16, *passim*.

terms sit at his table, and such persons with whom he considered one of his serving lads should eat. Now one day Qāsim, the date-merchant, detained (until the time of) his midday meal one of the persons he wanted to avoid. Thumāmah put up with this, holding himself in. Then subsequently he did the same thing again, doing it several times until Thumāmah's patience was exhausted and he shouted out. Turning to him he said: "What motivates you to do this? Had I wanted them my tongue was surely free (to send him an invitation) and my messenger would have taken it for me. So why do you detain a person with whom I am not on familiar terms[846] until my midday meal?" To which he replied: "I just want to make you (appear) a person of liberal disposition and dispel accusations of avarice and ill repute from you." Some time after that one of them wanted to leave and al-Qāsim said to him: "Where are you off to?" "My bowels are moving and I want to go home," he said. "Why don't you make (your) ablutions here?" he asked. "The privy is free and clean, the serving lad disengaged and ready.[847] One needn't feel embarrassed in front of Abū Ma'n[848]—his house is his brothers' house." So the man went in and made (his) ablution. Some days later he detained another man, then after that, yet another. Thumāmah was infuriated to a degree of fury in which he had never been before. Then he said: "This fellow detains them till my midday meal (time) to make me (appear) a person of liberal disposition. He detains them to shit at my house—why? Because anyone at whose house folk don't shit is mean with his food! I have heard them say: 'So-and-so dislikes (people) eating at his house', but I have never heard anyone say: 'So-and-so dislikes (people) shitting at his house!' "

Al-Qāsim was a mighty eater, with a gross swollen paunch, dirty in his manners when eating in company, the most liberal of folk with the food of other persons, the meanest of folk with his own food. He would behave in the way of a man who had never heard of decorum[849] and pleasing manners. He wasn't satisfied with his
182 own ill manners but had to drag his son / Ibrāhīm along with him. In dirty (manners) his son Ibrāhīm surpassed him by the difference between his (father's) conduct and that of all other people.[850] When they happened to coincide at Thumāmah's table no other person, to the right of them and to the left of them, succeeded in getting any part of the choicest dishes.

One day they brought him a great bowl containing a *tharīdah* shredded bread dish shaped like a minaret (pointed at the top), crowned with a garland of meaty bones, the most meaty bones there could be. Qāsim took what faced him, then he took a piece to his right, then what was in front of those between him and

846. The sense may be: "Who is unwelcome to me". Cf. Ḥaḍramī "*Al-uns bak*", "Welcome to you".

847. Presumably to pour water over his hands.

848. Note the familiar form of speech.

849. *Ḥishmah*, cf. p. 108, embarrassment.

850. Lit. the two worlds. *Tajammul*, pleasing manners, can also mean "restraint".

Thumāmah, till he left only a bone in front of Thumāmah, then he leaned over to his left side and did the same, his son imitating and emulating him. When Thumāmah perceived the *tharīdah* bereft of its veil, plundered, naked and the meat, all of it, in front of Qāsim and his son, except for one single piece in front of himself, he lifted it up and placed it in front of Ibrāhīm, his son. The latter did not push it back at him, counting it (a gesture of) generosity and kindness.

Qāsim, when he finished his midday meal, said: "Didn't you notice Thumāmah's generosity to my son and how he picked him out specially?" When this was told me I said: "Confound you, I don't suppose there is on Earth an unluckier meat-bone for your family than this one!" It was (sheer) exasperation that made him do it and this exasperation won't leave him until he takes it out of you. If he can come on a misdeed of yours, *wallāhi*, you're a dead man, and, if he can't, exasperation will enable him to discover one for you. The ways of imputing to a man an offence he hasn't committed are legion, and there isn't anybody who has not (done) something which, if you want, you can consider an offence. So how (will it be) with you when you're full of misdeeds from the crown of your head to the (sole of) your foot?"

Thumāmah was in the habit of entertaining folk to breakfast[851] on days when he was at (district) centres where the population of the provinces would congregate. They flocked to him, bringing their written petitions and appeals.[852] Among the baser sort of scholastic theologians are uncouth manners and they constitute a sore trial to the exponents of scholastic theology and heads of the professions. When Thumāmah saw how he had been caught unprepared he addressed them while they were at their evening meal and said: "Allah, noble and Almighty is He, said: 'Allah is not ashamed of the truth.'[853] Each of you must have justice. Anyone whose appeal has not come to me shall have his due respect like anyone whose appeal has preceded. Similarly, if I were able to extend kindness to you all no one of you would have more claim to it than another. Likewise, you, when I am unable (to take action) or something else supervenes, no one of you is more deserving of being deprived (of it) than another, or of action being taken against him or excusing
183 myself to him, than another. / When I brought some of you close to me, opened my door to you, distanced myself from a larger number than you and closed my door in their faces, my permitting you to enter was not an excuse for me nor my preventing the others from entering a plea against me." So they went away and did not return.

851. Ibn Qutaybah inserts here: "and he opened his door".

852. *Shafā'āt*, lit. mediations, intercessions.

853. Qur'ān, xxxiii, 53. The full verse is most relevant to the situation in which Thumāmah found himself. "Oh believers, do not enter the houses of the Prophet, unless leave be given you, for a meal, not watching until its time, but when you are invited then enter, and when you have fed disperse, and do not engage in familiar talk. That would annoy the Prophet and he would be ashamed before you (to ask you to leave) but Allah is not ashamed of the truth." *Ḥaqq*, truth, in the following sentence means justice.

Muḥammad al-'Arūḍī said: "A quarrel fell about between some folk and al-Mughannī (the singer) got up to intervene between them, he being a shaykh, unwell and a miser, and a man took him by his throat and (started to) throttle him and he shouted out: 'My livelihood, my livelihood!' So (the man) grinned and let go of him."

Ibn Abī Karīmah told me, saying: "They gave al-Kinānī, the singer, a large empty (storage) jar and when the time came for him to leave they placed it at the door for him but he didn't have the hire of a porter to carry it (for him) and that conceit which affects singers came over him and he wouldn't carry it. He would give it a kick and it would turn over and roll as far as the force of the kick took it and he would stand to the side so that nobody would see him and see what he was doing. Then he would close up with it and deal it another kick and it would turn over and roll and he would stand to the side. He carried on doing this until he reached (his) house with it."

They said: "'Abd al-Nūr, secretary to Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdullāh b. al-Ḥasan[854] had gone into hiding at Basrah among the 'Abd al-Qays (tribe)[855] from the Commander of the Faithful, Abū Ja'far (al-Manṣūr) and his governors. He was in a room in front of which was a wing above which he would not raise his head. When the hue and cry for him died down a little and he became sure the tribe was protecting him properly he began to sit in the wing, contenting himself with listening to the voice without seeing the person speaking, because of the sort of companionship (this afforded) during his prolonged loneliness. As the days dragged slowly by for him, these days passing in safety, he made a hole in the (wall of the) wing large enough for his eye (to see through). Then, as the days continued to drag by he began to peep through a crack in a door that had been nailed up. Then he started to open it up bit by bit till he was able to put his head out and show his face. When he saw nothing to arouse his suspicions, he sat himself in the entry hall and as he became more familiar he sat at the door of the house. Then he prayed with them at their prayer-place and re-entered (the house). Then after that (he took to) sitting (outside). Now the tribesfolk
184 were Arabs and they would / enter into conversation and quote apposite verse, proverbs and, of history, the 'Days (Battles) of the Arabs' and the 'Assemblies',[856] he remaining silent the while. One day a young gallant of theirs broke with their etiquette, disregarding part of the code of conduct in which they had brought him up, and said to him: 'O shaykh, we are tribesfolk who converse on various

854. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdullāh b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, an 'Alid pretender, an Amir and noble who revolted against the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Manṣūr. He had a large following, took Basrah and attacked Kufah but was ultimately slain in 145/762–3.

855. The 'Abd al-Qays b. Afṣā of eastern Arabia.

856. Though "what is traditionally relating concerning the Battle-days of the Arabs (*Ayyāmal-'Arab*) is to a large extent legendary, it describes with sufficient fidelity how tribal hostilities arose and how they were conducted" (Nicholson, *History*, 55). For the war of Basūs see note 807. By "Assemblies" would be meant the semi-legendary speeches etc. delivered on memorable occasions.

(topics) and sometimes we discuss scandal(s)[857] and quote lampoon(s). Now if you were to tell us to whom you belong we would avoid anything that might be displeasing to you. Even if (it were to mean) we avoid lampooning verse altogether and scandalous tales in their entirety, we could not be sure that our praise and commendation of some of the Arabs would not be displeasing to you. If you were to acquaint us with your lineal affiliation we would spare you the unpleasantness of listening to any satirical verses on your tribe or praise of your foes.' A shaykh of theirs slapped him on the face, saying: 'May you have no mother! An inquisition like the inquisition of the Khawārij![858] An investigation like the investigation of a person trying to uncover faults in others. Why didn't you leave what raises doubt in you for what raises no doubt in you,[859] and keep silent except about what you are certain will please him?' "

(He continued), "'Abd al-Nur said: 'Then my situation became uncomfortable for me, partly because of this business, and I transferred myself to the Quarter, Shiqq Banī Tamīm, and lodged with a man to take as a trustworthy person and kept myself hid till I should get to know the way of the tribe. Now the man had a privy adjoining the side of his house, opening on to a cul-de-sac but anyone in that street passing by it would see the place onto which the excrement dropped from the privy in that wing. The owner of the house was of strictly limited means but through my lodging with him he became better off. Folk, as they passed by, would keep glancing at the place of the dung and excrement, without my mind ever thinking of what they were thinking, but one day, while I was sitting, I was surprised by the sound of voices collected around the door and there was my landlord denying and remonstrating, and there were the neighbours crowding round him. 'What is this fine watery shit that drops from the wing (of) your (house),' they demanded, 'when we used to see nothing but droppings like those of animals, from the dryness of the balls of unleavened bread?[860] This fine watery shit means a diet of fresh food, and if you were not eating off one of those (persons) who has gone into hiding and concealed himself you would have produced him. The ancient[861] said:

Between foul deeds there intervenes a screen;
Good deeds you encounter no screen between.

185 " 'If this man were not a man wanted by the authority he would surely not have gone into hiding. We are not safe from his bringing down calamity on the Quarter,

857. Matters that involve individuals and their tribes in some act or characteristic considered dishonourable, as in Ibn al-Kalbī's *Book of Scandals* (*Mathālib*).

858. The strict "Puritanical" group that broke with 'Alī b. 'Alī Ṭālib after he was forced into accepting arbitration in his dispute with the Umayyad Mu'āwiyah.

859. Cf. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *buyū'* 3, "Leave off what raises doubt in you".

860. *Ka'k*. For flat *ka'k* see Landberg, *Daṭīnah*, 1052.

861. The celebrated poet Zuhuyr b. Abī Sulmā, one of the poets of the Golden Odes. *Sitr*, rendered as "screen" is said to mean *ḥayā'*, "decent shame".

but you don't care, if your circumstances improve in your immediate present, where they will lead you and what your tribal kinsfolk may have to face. So either you produce him to us or remove him from us!'

"'Abd al-Nūr said: 'I said: "This, *wallāhi*, this is deduction, but not the deduction of Banū Mudlij.[862] We belong to Allah.[863] I have come forth from Paradise into Hell!" I said: "This is a threat and he who warns is excused.[864] I did not expect that baseness could bring (people) as low[865] as you have seen it do with these (Banū Tamīm) nor did I expect that liberality would reach (the height) of what I saw in those (Banū 'Abd al-Qays)." ' "

I was present with al-Aṣma'ī one day when he turned to those sitting with him, to question them about their means of subsistence and on what they eat and drink. Addressing the man to the right of him he said: "Abū So-and-so what do you use as a relish with your bread?" "Meat," he replied. "Meat every day?" he asked. "Yes," said he. "With yellow (saffron), white (milk), red (meat without fat), dates steeped in milk, sour, sweet and bitter?" he asked. "Yes," said he. "What an ill diet that is," said (al-Aṣma'ī). "(This) was not the diet upon which the family of al-Khaṭṭāb subsisted. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭ āb, Allah's compassion be on him and be He pleased with him, used to flog for such as this and he would say: 'A man addicted to meat is the same as one addicted to wine.' "

Then he questioned the man next to him, saying: "Abū So-and-so, what do you use as a relish with your bread?" "Relishes and tasty dishes are many," he replied. "Is there ghee in your relish?" he asked. "Yes," said he. "Do you have both ghee (*saman*) and fat meat (*samīn*) together on a table?" he asked. "Yes," said he. "This was not the diet upon which the family of al-Khaṭṭāb subsisted," said al-Aṣma'ī. "'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Allah's compassion be on him and be He pleased with him, used to flog for such as this, and when he came on cooking pots of varying tastes he tipped them into one pot, saying: 'The Arabs, were they to eat this would assuredly kill one another.' "

Then he would turn to another, saying: "Abū So-and-so, what do you use as a relish with your bread?" "Plump meat and sucking kids," he replied. "And you eat it with the finest white *ḥuwwārī* flour?" he asked. "Yes," came the reply. "This was not the diet upon which the family of al-Khaṭṭāb subsisted. Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to flog for such as this. Haven't you heard him say: 'Do you think I am unacquainted with fine food—heart of wheat with the meat of young

862. These are Mudlij b. Murrah, famous as trackers, but also for the faculty of interpreting things from external signs and recognizing in humans to which tribe or family they belong. The tribe is of Kinānah.

863. This Qur'ānic phrase is frequently on the lips of devout Muslims when in trouble of some kind. The verse, ii, 156, runs: "We belong to Allah and to Him we return".

864. A proverb: "He hath become excused who hath warned thee that he will punish thee for a future evil deed from thee."

865. In tracing his presence through ordure and demanding the tribe in effect withdraw their protection from him.

kids?' Don't you see how he kept off eating (fine food) but claimed to be acquainted with it."

Then he would turn to the man next to him and say: "Abū So-and-so, what do
186 you use as a relish with your bread?" "We mostly / eat meat of slaughter-camels and from it we prepare these pieces of fried meat and make a roast of some of the rest." "And do you eat some of their livers and humps and make a relish for yourself?" he asked. "Yes," said he. "This was not the diet on which the family of al-Khaṭṭāb subsisted," said al-Aṣma'ī. "Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to flog for such a thing as this. Haven't you heard him say: 'Do you think I cannot prepare livers, strips of liver, well-roasted meat,[866] mustard and raisin sauce?' Don't you see how he refuses to eat it but approves of being acquainted with it?"

Then he would say to the man next to him: "Abū So-and-so, what do you use as a relish with your bread?" "*Shabāriq*-meat chopped into small pieces[867] and cooked, *khabīṣ*-comfits and almond jelly," he replied. "Food of the Persians, the diet of Chosroes, and heart of wheat, bee-honey and pure ghee," he commented, until had retailed them to the last item, saying at each one of them: "What an ill diet this is. This was not the diet of the family of al-Khaṭṭāb. Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to flog for such a thing as this."

When he concluded his homily one of them turned to him and said: "Abū Sa'īd, what relish do you use with your bread?" to which he replied: "One day milk, one day olive-oil, one day ghee, one day (dry) dates, one day cheese, one day just dry bread, one day meat—the diet of the family of al-Khaṭṭāb."

Then he said: "Abu 'l-Ashhab said: 'Al-Ḥasan (al-Baṣrī) used each day to buy for his family meat at half a dirham and, if it were dear, at a dirham. When his pension was held back his broth was made with fat."

I was informed of a man of Quraysh that he would say: "A person no good at refusing (to give) is no good at giving," and that he would say to his son: "My boy, if you give in a situation where it is inappropriate to give it's almost as if you are asking folk for a gift and you won't be given (anything)."

Then (al-Aṣma'ī) addressed himself to us, and said: "Don't you realize resignation is rarer and more respected than contentment? Covetous greed continues to be covetous greed and a covetous person does not look into the reasons (for it) or recognize false as opposed to genuine covetousness. A family is composed of two families—a demoralizing lust and a tooth ever grinding—and the gnawing of lust is more insupportable than the gnawing of tooth. They have averred that children are the grubs of money[868] and that a man with children has no money. I say that lust penetrates far beyond the reach of grubs and puts an

866. *Ṣalīqah* means also a thin round of bread.

867. *Shabāriq(at)* from Persian *bīshbārah*, according to al-Jawāliqī, with variants *shafārij/bashārij/fishfārij*. The term does not figure in *A Baghdad Cookery Book*. It seems to be applied to various sorts of meat in stews.

868. i.e. they eat into it. See also note 580.

end to what children fall far short of destroying. Al-Ḥasan has said: 'No one will become poor while following the right course.' A shaykh of the Basrah folk was asked: 'What's wrong with you that no money accrues to you?' 'Because I
187 begat children before money', he replied, / 'and other folk begat money before children.' Yet I have seen a person whose children arrived before his money and he restored (his finances) by prudent management (*iṣlāḥ*) assisted by economizing and supported by sound planning but I saw no regulating of my (own) desires or ability to restrain my appetite. Iyās b. Muʿāwiyah[869] said: 'A man will incur a debt of a thousand (dirhams), manage prudently and have a good return: he will incur a debt of two thousand, manage prudently and have a good return: or he may incur a debt of two thousand, spend three thousand—and sell his land to defray the extra expenditure he had incurred.' " He recalled a tale told him by Abū Līnah[870] who said: " 'I would see Ziyād, when he was amir, pass by us on a mule with a halter-rope of palm-fibre on its neck, lying back on its neck'. Salm b. Qutaybah used to ride on a mule by himself, accompanied by four thousand warriors. Al-Faḍl b. ʿĪsā saw him riding a donkey when he was amir and said: 'A beast for riding and transport of a prophet[871] and the modest garment of a man of authority.' Had Abū Sayyārah wanted to send forth the Arabs (from al-Muzdalifah)[872] on a Mahrī camel or a noble horse he would assuredly have done so, but he wished to guide the upright. 'Umar was mounted on a nag[873] and it ambled briskly along under him. He dismounted from it and said to his companions: 'Take this devil (*shayṭān*) away from me.' Then he said to his companions: 'Seek not for honour save through a thing by which Allah has made you honourable.'

"I used to admire one of the forebears because of his sayings: 'I am not acquainted with anything folk used to do, except the call to prayer,' and I (al-Aṣmaʿī) say likewise, and folk keep on a downward course as long as they keep mounting in extravagance and raising lofty buildings to tower (in status) (over others). The most amazing thing I have witnessed in this age is how Muways b. 'Imrān tried to outdo Abū 'Ubaydullāh b. Salmān in bragging over which of them

869. Abū Wāthilah Iyās b. Muʿāwiyah al-Muzanī, a 1st-century Basran, a man of intuition and intelligence, an outstanding qadi, a notable with the caliphs. He appears to have been interested in zoology and classification of the species of animals. He died in 122/740. He was for a time qadi of Basrah.

870. Abū Līnah al-Naṣr b. Abī Miryam, a Kufan regarded as a weak narrator of Tradition. Ziyād b. Abī Ṣufyān/b. Abī-hi.

871. The Köprülü text's order is "the worn garment of a prophet and the chosen camel of a man of authority".

872. In the pre-Islamic age at the pilgrimage the 'Adwān were in charge of the permission to be given the pilgrims to move from al-Muzdalifah by Minā to Mecca. The last of the family who inherited this office from father to son was, before Islam, Abū Sayyārah 'Umaylah b. al-Aʿzal riding a black she-ass. See Guillaume, *Life*, 50.

873. *Birdhawn*, a horse of mean breed, not of Arabian breed, coarse, hardy so as to endure travel (Lane, *Lexicon*, 186).

was the first to ride nags. What has a merchant to do with riding a nag? Merchants riding nags are just like Arabs riding cows!

"If, when they sit in cloth bowers,[874] set up (hot) baths in houses,[875] arrange for daily supplies of ice and sweet basil and employ singing girls[876] and eunuchs, people were to demand back their deposits[877] (with them) and qadis ask them to hand back the properties of orphans and estates to which there is no heir, they would surely revert to their religion, their (former) way of living and their provident economy. When those in possession of incomes, people of honourable standing and noble houses see them they disdain to be inferior to them in dress and appearance so they perish and are made to perish.

188 Abū Ya'qūb al-Khuraymī[878] averred that Ja'far b. Yaḥyā (al-Barmakī)[879] wanted something the way to which was by al-Aṣma'ī's door and that he gave a servant of his a bag holding a thousand dinars, saying: "I shall stop on my way back at al-Aṣma'ī's and he will talk to me and make me laugh. When you see me laugh, place the bag in front of him." When he went in and saw a (large water) jar with a broken top, a pitcher with a broken handle, a wooden bowl with its cracks mended, a large bowl (for entertaining) lying broken in pieces, behind which was a worn prayer-carpet with a threadbare black robe on top of it, he signed to his serving lad with a wink not to place the bag in front of him nor give him anything. Al-Aṣma'ī left nothing of the sort that would make (even) a person bereaved of a child or in anger laugh, without producing it to him—yet he did not (as much as) smile.

Some man or other said to him: "I don't know at which of the two things you did I was the more astonished—was it at your managing to refrain from laughing when he produced to you things of the sort at which one cannot help laughing—or your giving up your intention to make him a present after deciding to do so—quite contrary to what I know of you?" "Confound you," he said. "The man who engages the wolf as shepherd has treated the sheep cruelly and anyone who sows a salt marshland harvests poverty. *Wallāhi*, did I know that he conceals the favours (done him) by what he does,[880] I would not, indeed, be (overly) concerned (whether) he

874. See p. 90 and note 378.

875. The so-called "Turkish" baths.

876. On their role see Beeston, *The Epistle on Singing-Girls by Jahiz*, London, 1980.

877. Deposits seem to have been made for security, probably for fear of confiscation etc., with persons of trust.

878. See note 409.

879. The favourite of Hārūn al-Rashīd, preferred to all others. Al-Rashīd had him reside in the palace al-Khuld near his own palace. He made him governor over the west from al-Anbār to Ifrīqiyyah and tutor to his son al-Ma'mūn. His house was thronged with poets and scholars and he himself was a cultivated, well-spoken man and agreeable character. But al-Rashīd took against him, executed him and the Barmecides fell out of favour and their immense wealth was confiscated at the time of their fall.

880. "By what he does"—by making a show of poverty. This reflects badly on Ja'far b. Yaḥya's bounty and would make him look mean. So he is contemptuous of al-Aṣma'ī's praise of him, belied by the seeming poverty in which Ja'far leaves him.

spreads (any account of) them by word of mouth (lit. by tongue). How does praise (of a benefactor) by word of mouth compare with the (silent) praise the effects of riches on a man give? The tongue may lie but circumstances do not lie. How well Nuṣayb[881] expressed it where he says:

(At you) they stopped: then commended you as you well deserve.
Were they silent, to commend you their (full) saddle-bags[882] serve.

"Don't you realize that the sarcophagus of Abarwīz[883] affords him greater renown than Zuhayr's[884] verses afford the family of Sinān b. Abī Ḥārithah, because a poet (both) lies and speaks the truth, but the construction of seats[885] (in ante-rooms) does not lie at one moment and speak the truth the next. I am never going to do a kind action to this fellow again."

Al-Aṣma'ī used to beseech Allah[886] to preserve him from asking for loans or a fixed stipend, but Allah bestowed favours upon him till he himself became an individual from whom loans were sought and stipends asked for from what he
189 had. It so happened that one day two men approached him, / one of them asking for a stipend and the other for a loan. Both tackled him at once—this confused him and preoccupied his mind. Then he turned to the man wanting a loan and said:

"Practices change with changing times, each age deals (with things) in its own way, everything is finite and Allah 'is every day employed in an affair'.[887] The *faqīh*[888] would pass by a chance find but go by without picking it up, so that some other person, not he, would be tempted to keep it, since the majority of folk of that age would return a thing deposited with them in trust[889] but take charge of a chance find. But when they altered and grew corrupt it became the *faqīh's* duty to

881. A black client of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdī from the Yamāmah desert, an able poet. He was shown to al-Mahdī when he became caliph, was asked by him to recite verse, which pleasing al-Mahdī, he purchased him.

882. With provisions for travel.

883. The Sasanian Emperor Khusrāw Parwız (590–627), but that to which al-Barmakī alludes is no doubt the so-called tomb of the Achaemen monarch, Cyprus, at Pasargadae at Mashhad-i Murghab.

884. Zuhayr b. Abī Sūlmā whose famous *qaṣīdah* in the Golden Ode celebrates the munificence of two chiefs of Dhubyān, one of whom, Ḥārim b. Sinān b Abī Ḥārithah, paid the blood-money owing to the 'Abs tribe though they had not shed blood themselves. The *Dīwān* contains a number of panegyrics on Sinān and Ḥārim.

885. For those coming for audience with the 'Abbasid caliphs.

886. Lit. to seek the protection of Allah to save him from . . .

887. Qur'ān, lv, 29. The full verse and that following are most apposite to the situation though not, of course, really related to it. "Those in the Heavens and Earth ask (understand here as "beg of") Him, on every day He is occupied in an affair and which then of the benefits of the Lord of the two of you will you then deny?"

888. *Faqīh*, one cognizant of the laws of religion ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

889. In accordance with Qur'ān, ii, 282 etc., but in iv, 57, it means pledges held by judges from the parties to a legal suit.

take care of it, watch over it and withstand any temptation that came over him and put up with any inconvenience he suffered.

"I have heard that a man approached a friend of his to ask him for a loan of money. So he left him at the door, then came back out to him wearing a waist-wrapper.[890] 'What's up with you?' the man asked. 'I've come to do battle with you, to exchange blows, to quarrel and create an uproar.' 'Whatever for?' asked the man. 'Because', he replied, 'in taking my money you will have two alternatives before you—either to go off with it or put off repaying it to me. If you were to receive it by way of a charity or gift I would assuredly count it as a debt owed by you, for which you would surely be duly grateful.[891] If you receive it in the form of a loan, it is customary over debts and practice over lending to repay (them) or to go to court. If I take you to court I shall anger you and if I anger you you will let me hear what I find distasteful. So you will inflict upon me a conglomeration of postponement of repayment, bad language, unfriendliness and ruin of the favour done (you) in lending (to you)—and you are more to blame. I too shall get angry as you have done and when you bring me to the same state (of mind as yourself) I shall act as you have done—and both you and I will come (to a pass) such as that of which the Arab said: "I am full of anger and sorrow, my friend is choking back his sobs as he weeps."[892] What do you expect of a person filled with rage and full of anger, because I am filled with stupidity, full of ingratitude. But I go into the house and come out to you wearing a waist-wrapper, and give you today in advance what I had saved up till tomorrow (i.e. the reproaches possibly resulting from the borrower's failure to repay his debt, as depicted by the man approached for a loan) and you will have realized that the blow inflicted by a harangue is far less severe than a blow inflicted by malice and resentment, and thus will profit by the difference (in asperity) between the painfulness of the one and the other and the excess of abuse by the latter over the former.

" 'Then—I am too begrudging of my friendship for you and too niggardly with my share (of friendship) from you on your part to expose it to being spoiled and to assist you in breaking off relations (with me), so do not blame me that, to my mind, you were one of the people of your era, although to your own mind you were superior to them and far removed from their way of thinking. Do not charge people to know the mysterious and thereby do them injustice.' "

190 Then he said: "The loan goes on being (re)paid and the deposit safeguarded. When they[893] said: 'The horse that most needs be stirred to step out by kicking (its flanks) is the borrowed one', after it used to be said: 'The horse that most needs

890. As if stripped for battle!

891. 'Awāmiri–Jārim suggest the sentence should be completed "and this is a thing you do not want for yourself and I do not want for myself".

892. For the full explanation of this proverb see Appendix 57.

893. The misers?

looking after is the borrowed one.'[894] After it was said to a certain one of them: 'Treat it kindly,' he replied: 'It's a borrowed one.' 'Then kill it,' said the other man. 'The loan has gone bad and is closed so is this chapter!'[895]

"And when they[896] said:

Gird up your robe and for a profit hold yourself ready.
Rub your brow with garlic and be prepared for destiny,
And, if you walk, lower your wing out of humility,[897]
Till you win, deposited, an orphan's trust property.[898]

"When the trustees and executors have eaten (away the estate), the dividers of inheritances[899] and money-changers[900] grazed over it, it must be preserved and buried, for the earth's consuming it is better for it than that an immoral deceiver and mean betrayer (of his trust) should consume it. This is to be taken in conjunction with the words of Aktham b. Ṣayfī in that era: 'Were you (f.) to be asked for a loan where would you go?'[901] 'I would bring down reproaches on my people,' she answered.

"So I, today, refrain from (receiving) loan(s) and deposits, lending and assigning fixed stipend(s) and I dislike my actions to contradict my words. Now, respecting lending, why did I notify you? And with regard to fixed stipends, only the Treasury has the capacity (to grant them). If I were to give you a single dirham I would certainly be opening a door to my money which mountain and sandy deserts could not close up. Were I able to erect a rampart like that of Gog and Magog[902] in front

894. A verse of which the preceding hemistich runs: "We found in the Book of the Banū Tamīm" (Mubarrad, *Kāmil*, i, 396). *Al-mu'ār*, the borrowed one, is how, in the context, al-Aṣma'ī understands it, but the editor of Ibn Qutaybah's *'Uyūn* provides a number of other senses. Lane (*Lexicon*, 2210) adopt the reading *al-mi'ār*, the horse that turns from the road with its rider. Abū 'Ubaydah thinks the derivation from *'āriya/'āriyyah*, a loan, is people's mistaken belief.

895. On the pledge, conservation of the deposit and loan, until returned to the owner ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

896. The verse is of Musāwir al-Warrāq (the Bookseller) in advice to his son, and there are many versions of it. The verses figure as part of a longer poem in *al-Aghānī*. Musāwir was a Kufan, a client of Jādilah of 'Adwān, a source of Traditions but not a notable one. The brow is rubbed with garlic to produce the effect of the cicatrice resulting from the brow's touching the ground in frequent prayer prostrations—a mark of piety! See Appendix 25.

897. Cf. Qur'ān, xvii, 24, "Lower to them (one's parents) the wing of humility out of compassion", i.e. behave to them with humility.

898. The general drift seems to be to act devoutly and respectfully till you are in charge of the property from the estate of the deceased held in trust for an orphan—then you can employ it to your own advantage!

899. The *qassām* who has the rather complicated task of dividing the estate between the heirs of the deceased, for which he receives a fee from them.

900. The *ṣarrāf*, lit., money-changer, was more in the nature of a banker with whom deposits were made.

901. Probably, "What action would you take?" She would censure her people for having put her in this position.

902. Qur'an, xviii, 93–4. The rampart has been identified with fortifications that extended from the west shore of the Caspian Sea to the Pontus Euxinus/Black Sea, constructed, as it is said, by Alexander the Great and repaired by Yazdigird II, the Sasanian monarch.

of it indeed (I would do so). Folk gape, wide-open-mouthed before anyone who owns (a few) dirhams. Nothing but sheer hopelessness (of getting anything) holds them back from snapping (at him) with their front teeth. If they once but taste, there will be left no bleating ewe nor grumbling she-camel, goat-hair nor wool,[903] live nor dead stock,[904] but they devour and gobble it up. Don't you realize what you want to do to your shaykh? You just want to turn him into a pauper! And when you have turned him into a pauper, you will have murdered him. And you realize what happens in the case of murdering a believing soul!"

I have not compared al-Aṣma'ī's words to this man, when he said: "I am too begrudging of my friendship for you and too niggardly with my share (of friendship) from you to expose it to being spoiled", with Thumāmah's words only
191 when the latter said to Ibn Sāfirī:[905] "You biter of his mother's clitoris, / before my very eyes, I declare to you that it is only out of compassion on my part that I speak abusively to you." This was when he was sorry for having called him a (clitoris)-biter, and thought those words would make this (seem) a favour and kindly action on his part!

I was actually with Thumāmah when two men came to him, (one of whom said: "I have a request of you,") and Thumāmah said: "And I too have a request of *you*." "And what may your request be?" asked he. "I shan't tell it you until you promise me to grant it," said Thumāmah. ("Granted,") he replied. "My request is that you do not ask this request of me," he said. "But you don't know what it is," said the other. "Yes indeed I do know," said Thumāmah. "What is it then?" he asked. "It is a request and nothing is a request that does not require a certain amount of bother," he answered. "Then I go back on the undertaking I gave you," said the man. "But I don't give you back what I took from you," said Thumāmah.

The other addressed himself to him, saying: "I have a request of Manṣūr b. al-Nu'mān". He replied: "Say: 'I have a request of Thumāmah b. Ashras,' because it is I who will grant the request for you, and Manṣūr who will grant it to me. I grant the request but someone else grants it to me." Then he went on: "I do not speak of governorships and I do not speak of money (lit. dirhams) (squeezed) from folk's life blood[906] because requests come, following one in the footsteps of another. The person whom I ask today to give to you, will ask me tomorrow to give to someone else. For me to make you this gift straightaway (from my own money) is less trouble to me. (But) I have no money by me and had I money by me my standing recurrent expenses would at once use it all up. But I shall criticize anyone you like for this.[907] I owe it to you to criticize anything you want." I said to him: "What if you criticize a man in a case concerning which no petition has previously

903. Cf. the proverbs, "*Mā lahu thāghiyah wa-lā rāghiyah*", "He has not a sheep/goat or camel", and, "*Mā lahu labad wa-lā sabad*", "He has absolutely nothing".

904. i.e. goods/land or animals.

905. Ayyūb b. Isḥāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Sāfirī, a narrator of Tradition—perhaps this man.

906. Lit. hearts, but *qalb* also means the black drop of blood inside the heart.

907. i.e. anyone who does not give. Since to do so is no bother to me ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

been made—how would he reply to you?" And he laughed so much he (had to) lean against the wall.

Abū Hammām al-Sanūṭ (the Beardless)[908] once came to speak to him about the repair of his (Thumāmah's) house which he had undertaken to build in the Ribāṭ of 'Abbādān[909] and he said: " 'You have reminded me of the spear-thrust but
192 I was forgetting.'[910] I had decided to pull it down when / I heard that the Jabriyyah (opponents of the doctrine of free will)[911] had taken up residence in it." He went on: "Allah forfend! Would you pull down a benefaction and a house you have made into a *waqf* for the path (of Allah)?" He went on: "And are you surprised at this? I wanted to pull down the mosque which I would have built for Yazīd b. Hāshim when he gave up building on the main road and built it in a road off the main road, and when I heard that he was introducing confusion into theology (*kalām*) to its detriment and supporting the Shamiriyyah[912] against the Mu'tazilites." Had Abū Hammām wanted it (the mosque) he would have obtained the whole area of the land (of the site of the mosque) from Thumāmah as a place to tether (camels, sheep and goats). When the expression (seemed) right to him (Thumāmah) he no regard for the soundness or nonsensicality of the sense.

A man came, walking, to al-Ghāḍiri[913] (and said:) "Your friend al-Qādimī has been robbed on the highway." "So what do you want?" he asked. "That you replace what he's lost," he replied. "Then he hasn't been robbed on the highway but I have!" said he.

To Ibn Ashkāb the money-changer there came a friend of his to ask him for a

908. An obscure devout person, mentioned in *al-Ḥayawān*. While on a raid at sea a shark bit off his testicles, his beard fell off and he was nicknamed al-Sanūṭ because of this.

909. 'Abbādān, the island on the left bank of the Tigris on a salt-flat, had some importance from the time of the Caliph 'Uthmān. The first to set up a frontier post (*ribāṭ*) was a certain 'Abbād b. al-Ḥuṣayn. A client of the Banū Sa'd, al-Rabī' b. Ṣuḥ is said to have collected money from the Basrans and used it to fortify it as a frontier post. He raided by sea to India. He died in 160/776–7 and is buried there. It became a centre of pilgrimage with a number of *ribāṭs*, called by G. Marçais (*EI*[1]) "fortified monasteries" but by the time of al-Jāḥiẓ those at 'Abbādān seem to have been more of the nature of religious colleges.

910. The quotation is, from three extempore hemistiches of Rubaym b. Hazn al-Hilālī, when, moving from place to place with his women folk and beasts (*māl*), he encountered a band of thirty Banū Taghlib to whom he said: "Your business is with the beasts but leave (the women in) the camel litter." "We consent", they said, "if you throw down your spear." "My spear stays with me," he said, and charged down on them, killing one man and felling another. Then he declaimed these verses. The saying is reported by al-Maydānī and seems to have become proverbial.

911. The most prominent exponent of this view was a certain Jahm b. Safwān, executed 128/746 by the Umayyads. The revolt in which he was involved demanded they should act according to the Book of Allah and *Sunnah* (custom) of his Prophet, the latter probably the *Sunnah Jāmi'ah*.

912. Probably the followers of Abū Shamir of the Murji'ah sect, who held that a Muslim does not become an unbeliever (*kāfir*) through committing a sin—a tenet diametrically opposed to that of the Khawārij. They were also opposed on points of doctrine to the Mu'tazilīs. See notes 337 and 930.

913. Al-Ghāḍiri was an inhabitant of Medina, known for his amusing anecdotes and who lived up to the era of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Manṣūr.

loan of money and he replied: "Should you want me to say (no) I would assuredly say it, and to make excuses I would do so, and to use some of the circumlocutions employed by a man whose brothers borrow, I would do so. But I see nothing better than getting down to hard facts and speaking one's mind.[914] I won't do it! If you look for an excuse for me it will be more comforting to your mind—if not, so much the worse for you!"

Al-Fayḍ b. Yazīd came to sore straits and said (to himself): "*Wallāhi*, I've nothing left to live on, the knife has come to the bone[915] and the sale (of my crop) is still a long time off to come. The best idea is to bring this unhappy state of affairs to the notice of Muḥammad b. 'Abbād[916] for he is aware of the situation, (my) honest dealing, my promptness in settling and the means I anticipate I shall have to do so. If I were to write him a letter that would please him and he would surely at once meet this need in which I am at present."

He took up pen and paper to write him the sort of note a trusting person, on free and easy terms, (would write), not doubting that he would respond to his request in the same way as he used to respond to a request from him. And one of
193 those in the reception room went on to Muḥammad / b. 'Abbād to bring him the news of the impending arrival of al-Fayḍ's request of him. But something befell him (Muḥammad b. 'Abbād) with which he was unable to cope except by pre-empting his (al-Fayḍ's) letter to preoccupy him with his request of him (al-Fayḍ) to the exclusion of his (al-Fayḍ's) request of him. So he wrote to him:

"My financial position is weak, my income small, my family numerous, prices high, my stipends from the Government Office (*Dīwān*) in arrears (lit. withheld); and these days there have opened before me the (flood)-gates of such misfortunes as had not come into my reckoning. So if you can see your way to sending me what you can (manage), do send it quickly, for I am in the most pressing need of it."

The letter arrived with al-Fayḍ before the latter's got to him, and when he read it he said: "We belong to Allah and to Him we return,"[917] and wrote to him: "My brother, you have been stricken by a double catastrophe, in that the poverty-stricken state of your family (has happened to) coincide with the poverty-stricken state of mine. I have been (trying to) contrive for them but I shall bestir myself by various devices besides this and take action to sell what I have, even if it be at some discount."

914. Lit. peeling/taking the bark off the stick. "I won't do it", Arabic *laysa afʿal*, perhaps the broken language of a non-Arab, as the strange name Ashkāb suggests he might be.

915. A proverbial saying meaning "I've reached the limit".

916. Muḥammad b. 'Abbād is depicted here as a cultured man of wit and well-known for his miserliness. Al-Ḥājirī discounts the idea that the person intended is Muḥammad b. 'Abbād al-Muhallab, the Amir of Basrah under al-Ma'mūn, and thinks he is more likely to be a secretary and poet, Muḥammad b. 'Abbād whose ancestor was a client of the Bajīlah tribe. He is mentioned in *al-Ḥayawān*, I, 265, and was a reciter (i.e. memorizer) of verse and a scholar.

917. See note 668, a Qur'ānic phrase uttered when in trouble.

When the letter came in reply to Ibn ʿAbbād he remained unmoved and cast his friend into the direst undertakings, putting him to great trouble.

There was a man of the sons of al-Ḥarbiyyah[918] Quarter, of generous and cheerful disposition, who would frequently ask Ibn ʿAbbād to visit him, splurging money on him by way of (his) liking for literati and the shaykhs of the wits. He used to suppose, in his generous nature, that his visits to Ibn ʿAbbād at his house meant a growth in friendliness (between them). He had heard of his close-fistedness but he did not suspect that he (Ibn ʿAbbād) had no way of getting at the cause of it.

One day he came unexpectly (to see him), saying: "I have come to you uninvited and I'll be happy with whatever there is to hand." "There isn't anything to hand", said he, "but your words 'what is to hand' must allude to something." "Then a bit of something salt,"[919] he said. "Is a bit of something salt nothing?" he asked. "Yes, surely (it is something)," he replied. (Then) he added: "And we drink on an empty stomach." (Ibn ʿAbbād) said: "If I had *nabīdh* in the house it would be on the occasion of a wedding feast." "Then I'll send for *nabīdh*," he said. "And if you're going to fetch over *nabīdh*", said Ibn ʿAbbād, "bring over what does well with *nabīdh* at the same time." "I have no objection to that", he said, "and to bringing over dessert and sweet basil, except because I consider this visit to be by an invitation of yours and this is not possible without your having some effect in it." Said Muḥammad (b. ʿAbbād): "A door has opened before me through which there is good for me without it being bad for you. On this palm tree is a pair of turtle-doves with two fully grown chicks. If we can
194 find a man (able) to climb it, for it / is tall and smooth, and they don't fly off—for they're already up and stretching their wings to fly—we'll make a spicy *ṭubahijah*[920]-stew of the one and a *gardanāj*-girdle-roast[921] of the other, as it's a day for a *gardanāj*.

They looked among the neighbours for a man to go up that palm tree and could not get one but they directed them to a field worker of one of al-Ḥarbiyyah folk and the messenger kept on looking for him till he came on him. When he brought him and he looked at the palm tree he said: "This can't be climbed or gone up without a *tabliyā*-belt[922] or *barband*-girdle, and how can I try to go up it without a rope?" So they pressed him to find this for them. Off he went and was away a long time, then brought it to them. When he did get to the top of it one of the pair flew off but he brought the other down, and it became both the *ṭubāhij* and the *gardanāj*, the morning *and* evening meal!

918. The great northern suburb of west Baghdad.

919. *Māliḥ*, salted fish dishes as in *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 24–3.

920. This is spelled *ṭabāhajah* also, a Persian word. See Appendix 22.

921. *Gardanāj*, Persian, meat parboiled and roasted (Steingass, 1080–1). Grilled meat made into balls on red coals or a girdle after marinating it in perfumed water and spices and part-cooking it.

922. Used for climbing palm-trees. See Appendix 58. The *barband* is the Persian equivalent.

Ibrāhīm b. Sayyābah[923] wrote to a friend of his, a person his equal in culture but his superior in regard to his circumstances—he was extremely wealthy, well provided with stock[924]—to borrow from him something of which to avail himself until some of what he had reason to hope would come to him. This friend wrote back to him declining, saying: "Money is lied for and against itself. Under this head people attribute to people what they have not got. Today I am hard-pressed and circumstances are not as I would like and the person most fit to excuse is an intelligent friend."

When his letter came to Ibn Sayyābah (he wrote back to him): "If you are lying may Allah make you truthful and if you are blameworthy may Allah make you to be excused."

195 'Amr al-Jāḥiẓ said: "As the book expanded and grew prolix I needed to introduce into it something, if just a little, of the culture (*'ilm*) and diet of the Arabs, those things for which they laud each other and those for which they satirize each other, so that the book will have (succeeded) in weaving together the strands of this kind. Were it not that it would go beyond the capacity of people's appetites (for them) the history of the Arabs and bedouin Arabs would have amounted to more than the whole of this volume.

Meals are of various sorts. *Da'wah* (invitation) is a comprehensive noun and so is *zallah*[925] (a repast prepared for guests). Then into it come *'urs* (a wedding feast), *khurs* (a feast celebrating the birth of a child), *i'dhār* (a circumcision feast), *wakīrah* (a feast on the completion of a building) and *naqī'ah*[926] (feast for a person returned from a journey). A *ma'dabah* (banquet) is a noun for any meal to which whole groups of people are invited. The poet said:

In winter we invite all and sundry to dine.
With us you won't see the host[927] select and confine.

It comes in Tradition that "the Qur'ān is Allah's banquet".[928] Folk maintain that

923. A personage of the latter half of the 2nd-century cultured and well-bred class, bon viveurs and raconteurs, consorting with the poets of his time but no poet (of quality) himself. He liked the company of the singer Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī and his son who flattered him in verse. He even had contacts with Yaḥyā b. Khālid the Barmakī, and the vizier al-Faḍl b. al-Rabī'.

924. Goods etc. See note 904.

925. In the dialect of Iraq it meant food carried from the table of one's friend or relation. It also meant a marriage feast. Several of the words in this passage assigned a technical sense by al-Jāḥiẓ are applied also to meals on other occasions.

926. Animals taken as booty and slaughtered before it is divided, or any animal slaughtered to entertain guests, or a feast on a man's wedding night.

927. Arabic *Ādib*, host. The verse is of Ṭarafah b. al-'Abd of the great Bakr tribe settled in al-Baḥrayn along the Gulf. He is one of the poets of the Golden Odes. He was executed at the instance of the ruler of Ḥīrah about 554 A.D. by treachery.

928. In full, the Qur'ān is Allah's banquet on Earth. i.e. the Qur'ān is like an invitation to a repast with food which Allah has prepared for the people, in which they have well-being and benefits (Ibn al-Athīr, *Nihāyah*).

the *'urs* is (the same as) the *walīmah* (a meal given at the *'urs*), because of the saying of the Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, to 'Abd al-Rahmān (b. 'Awf):[929] "Make a wedding feast (*walīmah*) if simply (by slaughtering) a ewe Ibn 'Awn (*sic*). And after him al-Aṣma'ī used to censure 'Amr bin 'Ubayd,[930] saying: "He does not accept (invitations to) *walīmahs*," considering the meal provided at the *imlāk* (signing the marriage contract), the *i'rās*,[931] the *subū'* (the meal on the seventh day following a marriage or a birth)[932] and the *khitān* (circumcision) to be *walīmahs*. (The word) *'urs* is well but al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī[933] maintained that this noun is derived from their maxim: "There is no perfume after a bride (*'arūs*)." Al-Aṣma'ī used to consider *al-'Arūs* to be specifically a man who cohabited with his wife for the first time without having perfumed himself, and subsequently any man cohabiting with wife for the first time had this noun applied to him. Such (interpretation) as this is not established but it is current in poetry and figures in history.

With regard to *khurs*, it is the (breakfast) meal prepared for men and women on the morning after a birth. They maintain that its root meaning derives from *khursah*, food for a woman in childbed. A slave-woman said, when there was
196 nobody to / look after her and give her the treatment extended to a parturient: "Make the birth breakfast for yourself, there is no one else to do it for you!"[934] On *khursah*, Musāwir al-Warrāq[935] (the Bookseller) says:

When a woman of Asad gives birth to a boy,
Of the lad's mean nature bear her tidings of joy!
Banū Dubayr women will make her birthday feast
Of whatever they come on, of what they count least.[936]

929. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *nikāḥ*, 68 quotes this from Ibn 'Awn. Ibn 'Awn, *infra* is probably the shaykh of the people of Basrah, Abū 'Awn 'Abdullāh b. 'Awn Artabān al-Muzanī, a Traditionist and man of piety (*ob.* 151/768).

930. Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. 'Ubayd b. Bāb, one of the first Mu'tazilites. His ancestor Bāb was captured in Fars and became a client of Tamīm. He was in the circle of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', When the latter broke with al-Ḥasan, 'Amr followed him into the movement they formed—the Mu'tazilites "those who separated themselves". He achieved great prominence in the movement and became the "shaykh of the scholastic theologians".

931. Conducting of a bride newly married to the bride groom's house, and consummation of the marriage.

932. See *Ṣan'ā'*, op. cit., 558.

933. Compiler of the celebrated anthology of pre-Islamic verse, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* (*ob.* ca. 170/786), made at the instance of the Caliph al-Manṣūr for the instruction of his son al-Mahdī.

934. A well-known proverb of which there are various explanations.

935. A Kufan poet, author of the verses on p. 190: "Gird up your robe . . .". Al-Ḥājirī says he belonged to the class of jesting poets of which Ḥammād 'Ajrad was a notable figure. Nevertheless he lived in the religious ambience in Kufah and was a narrator of Tradition, and composed verse in praise of Abū Ḥanifah, founder of the Ḥanafī rite.

936. The despised food is the dog and Asad are lampooned for eating dogs. Allegations are also made against them of cannibalism. See p. 215. For the special diet given a parturient woman, see *Ṣan'ā'*, op. cit., 557b, so it is doubly shaming Asad should show meanness of this occasion. Dubayr is Ka'b b. 'Amr of Asad.

Ibn al-Qamī'ah[937] said:

> The evil of you are those settling (at the tribal assembly place). The good of you are the flow of milk of a female (*kharūs*) with a small flow of milk, of the hares, that has brought forth but once.[938]

The *kharūs* is the one for whom the birthday food is prepared.[939]

I'dhār is the meal at a circumcision. One says "*ṣabiyy ma'dhūr*" and "*mu'dhar*" (a circumcised boy), both. A Companion of the Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, said, in allusion to their nearness in age: "We were circumcised (*i'dhār*) in the same year."[940] Al-Nābighah said:

> They were married as virgins, delighting in well-being.
> Knowing *i'dhār* at hand they[941] hastened on the marrying.

They maintain they called the circumcision meal *i'dhār* on account of the close association and vicinity of one to the other.

Al-Aṣma'ī used to say: "The Arabs employed words in (certain) senses and when those senses altered they no longer employed those words. Into this (category) enters folk's saying today "He drove her bridal gift to her". This was only said when the bridal gift consisted of camels and sheep. Analagous to al-Aṣma'ī's dictum is the fact that people owning dates, whose blood-monies and dowers consist of dates, used not to say "So-and-so drove his bridal gift". He went on: "Into this comes folk's saying today: "So-and-so built over his wife last night (i.e. cohabited with her)." These words were just those of a man who erected his (leather) tent or (goat hair) tent over his wife—that was his "building". This why another said:

> Should long rains fall they'll have a man with a tent there
> Erect (them) a covering of worn camel-hair.[942]

197 Al-Aṣma'ī used to consider part of this to be things of which there is no reason to speak here.

One of the meals they give is the *wakīrah*, the feast on (the completion) of a

937. 'Amr b. Qamī'ah b. Dhirrīḥ/Dharīḥ of the Bakr tribe was one of the most ancient poets of the pre-Islamic age, said to have been the first who composed verse and *qaṣīdahs*, odes. Born about 480 A.D. he is credited with dying at the age of ninety when accompanying the poet Imru'u 'l-Qays to the Byzantine Emperor. He spent some time at the Lakhmid capital al-Ḥīrah.

938. More verses of the poem are cited in *al-Ḥayawan*. For a Bedouin tribe to settle is regarded as a loss of honour by the migrants. The second hemistich is susceptible of a number of interpretations, but the sense is that good persons of Asad are extremely rare.

939. Alternative senses of *Kharus* are—a female in the first part of her pregnancy, or—having a scanty flow of milk.

940. The Tradition of Sa'd runs: "We were circumcised in one (and the same) year. They used to circumcise at an age between ten and fifteen years."

941. i.e. their mothers. Is the *i'dhār* of the groom or possibly of the bride intended?

942. A *hijad* is a tent soft hair (*wabar*) or a striped garment. A variant would make the sense: "If rain pours down continuously . . ." "They" refers to horses.

building. A man would entertain those building for him to a meal and when he had completed building he would invoke the blessing of good fortune (*barakah*) (for it) by preparing a feast for the builders of it and inviting them (to it). In this connection one of them said:

The most splendid feasts the clan's there to see
Are the *ʿurs*, *iʿdhār* and *wakīrah*, (three)!

The camels and slaughter camels from the side of the (as yet undistributed) booty whose throats they cut they call *naqīʿah*.[943] The poet[944] says:

Off with their heads—with the sword sharp surely we shall them fell
Like a butcher, for newly arrived guests, fells the camel.

ʿAqīqah is an invitation to partake of the flesh of the ram the throat of which is cut at the shaving of the head of the recently born boy.[945] *ʿAqīqah* is a noun for the hair itself and hair (plural) is *ʿaqāʾiq*.

They say: "*ʿUqqū ʿan-hu*", i.e. "Shave his hair". They (also say): "*ʿUqqa ʿan-hu*", and "*ʿUqqa ʿalay-hi*". The ram is called *ʿaqīqah* (by extension) because of the close association (of ideas) and because of what is involved. Then they called the feast by it after the name given the ram.

Al-Aṣmaʿī used to say: "Let nobody of you say: 'I have eaten a *mallah*,'[946] rather should he say: 'I have eaten a *khubzah* (a piece of bread).' The *mallah* is just the place where a piece of bread (is baked)." Likewise he used to say of the *rāwiyah* and the *mazādah* (leather water-bag): "The *rāwiyah* is the camel (which carries water-skins)," and they maintain they derive the *rāwiyah* (reciter, bard) of verse from that.

Now with regard to invitation to these (various) sorts (of repast), some are reprehensible and some laudable. The reprehensible kind consists of the exclusive singling out of distinguished individuals and the laudable kind in inviting the commonalty. The latter is that the person providing a banquet and responsible for the invitations, when his messenger arrives and the tribe are in their groups of hair tents and meeting places, says: "Do accept (the invitation) to So-and-so's banquet," treating them in common as a company (*jaflah*), *jaflah* meaning the same as *jufālah*, that is laudable. But when he picks on certain individuals, saying: "Up you, So-and-so" and "Up you, So-and-so", inviting some and leaving out others, he is said to have *intaqara* (selected some from a group). Al-Hudhalī said:

943. *Naqīʿah*, camel or any other animal slaughtered to provide for guests.

944. Muhalhil b. Rabīʿah of Taghlib, the famous poet and warrior who opened the War of Basūs (note 807) with Bakr to avenge his brother Kulayb. A tradition also ascribes to him the composition of the first Arabian ode (*qaṣīdah*).

945. On the seventh day after he is born.

946. The hot ash on which the bread is cooked, or the hearth containing them. Cf. Landberg, *Glossaire datînois*, 2712. *Rāwiyah*, a water-skin.

Oft of a night its butcher is warmed by its shit,
Selecting the rich to invite to eat of it.[947]

198 He says: "He only invites men of wealth and persons who will invite him in return: this is repugnant." In this context one of the wits among us said:

For laden table and roast kid choice he conferr'd
Upon him from whom he aspired to benefit,
Yet, in his hand if he held measures twain, entire,
Of mustard seed,[948] no single grain would drop from it.

Al-Ṭarafah b. al-'Abd[949] said:

In winter we invite all and sundry to dine.
With us you won't see a host select and confine.

When Bisṭām b. Qays al-Shaybānī[950] raided Mālik b. al-Muntafiq al-Ḍabbī and 'Āṣim b. Khalīfah al-Ḍabbī made sure of his identity, he attacked and stabbed him, saying the while:

"(Take) this—and he does not invite me among the company (*ḥaflah*)." It has been quoted (alternatively) as *fi 'l-jaflah*[951] *lā yad'ū-nī*. It looks as if he hated him when he would invite the people (who attended) the reception, (given by him), but left him out.

According to their way of thinking, objectionable food is of two sorts, one being food in famines and years of dearth, the (food of) those worn out by agedness, the indigent, the mean, cowards, needy persons and the weak.[952] Into this enters *faththh* (a poor wild grain of the desert Arabs),[953] *du'ā'* (a black desert grain),[954] *habīd* (colycynth seed),[955] crusts of bread that have stuck to the (side of the) *tannūr*,[956] flour mixed with hair (*qurrah*),[957] pieces of dry bread (without a

947. One slaughtering a camel uses its droppings as fuel.

948. Mustard seed is very small. He is so carefully mean!

949. Of the great Bakr tribe settled in al-Baḥrayn of the Persian Gulf, a famous poet with a *qaṣīdah* in the Golden Odes. He went to the Lakhmid court at Ḥīrah about 554 but his satire on the king and verses on the latter's beautiful sister so enraged the monarch that he sent him with a sealed letter to Baḥrayn instructing its governor to execute him, which was duly done. The verse is also quoted on p.195.

950. Bisṭām, Lord Shaybān, was slain by 'Āṣim on the Day (Battle) of al-Shaqīqah between the tribes of Shaybān and Ḍabbah.

951. The general invitation, *jaflah* for *ḥaflah*.

952. The Köprülü reading *al-ghaththh*, emaciated, seems preferable to *al-ḍa'īf* of al-Ḥājirī's text.

953. This is pounded and made into bread in times of hunger, a poor kind of food.

954. Eaten by the needy in the desert in times of drought.

955. Colycynth seed is eaten in times of necessity. The fruit is broken and the seeds steeped in water, then, after the upper rind is thrown away, washed, cooked and some flour is added to them. Sometimes *'aṣīdah* (see Appendix 29) is made of them. They are steeped to remove their bitterness.

956. See note 106 for the *tannūr* oven.

957. *Qurrah* has a variety of senses but it is defined on p. 199 as rendered here.

relish), steeped fruit of the thorn tree,[958] tough dry meat, skin of lambs[959] and kids and serpents. As regards *faẓẓ* (water from a camel's stomach) it does not come under this head, even if it is a distasteful drink, and neither does *majdūḥ* (blood drawn from the veins of a she-camel). In the case of *faẓẓ* it is what is pressed out of the stomach (*farth*) when they were overcome by thirst in deserts. Concerning *majdūḥ*—when they were exhausted by thirst they would cut the throats of camels and bring large bowls to the top of their chests (where they had cut the throat) so as not to lose any of their blood. When the blood became cold they beat it with their hands and stirred it vigorously with sticks until it disintegrated so that the liquid content (serum) of it became separated from the solid just as butter is separated from butter-milk by shaking in a skin and cheese by rennet. This liquid they divided among them and made do with it until they emerged from the desert. The poet (al-Ṭirimmāḥ)[960] said:

Neither wild nor black grain she ate, nor gathered seed
Of colycynth, such as makers of *habīd* need.[961]

199 Umayyah b. Abi 'l-Ṣalt[962] said:

They do not dispute with each other over the reins of partnership,[963]
And the food of their wives is not pieces of dry bread,
Nor horn/hair[964] which is found repulsive as food.
And there is no one in distress, no poor client.

958. *Baram* is the fruit of *'iḍāh* thorn bushes/trees, acacias, but the fruit of the *salam* is eaten, says Lane (who lists the various species of *baram*, *Lexicon*, 195), and has a sweet taste. The *baram* might also be the fruit of the *rāk* bush which has a purplish berry, rather sharp to taste, but it can be eaten (see note 61). It is difficult to be precise as to which bush/tree al-Jāḥiẓ refers, but it could be the *salam* tree, the name current in Arabia to our day.

959. For the Prophet's eating these skins see *Musnad 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb*, Beirut, 1948, 88 seq.

960. Al-Ṭirimmāḥ b. Ḥakīm of Thu'al of the Ṭayyi' tribe, the well-known poet, was born in Damascus, but in Kufah he turned to become a Kharijite, attacked the Umayyads and was imprisoned by the Caliph Hishām. He died probably before 112/730. As a townsman, not a Bedouin, he was said to make incorrect use of Arabian expressions.

961. Lit., as the makers of *habīd* extract from the colycynth to eat.

962. For Umayyah b. Abi 'l-Ṣalt see Appendix 59.

963. The latter part of the hemistich had a variant reading *'anaq shawl*, young female kids yielding little milk, but this seems less likely than al-Ḥājirī's text (and difficult), given the poet was engaged in trading (see Appendix 60). Al-Iskafī, *Mabādiʾ al-lughah*, 65, supports this reading and interpretation. These verses and those of al-Jarmī that follow are not easy to understand out of context, describing customs strange to us and perhaps to al-Jāḥiẓ also, and there are alternative versions of certain lines. They are therefore translated literally without attempt at versification.

964. In the third hemistich I reject al-Ḥājirī's correction *qarad*, wool, hair, in favour of the Köprülü *qarn*, horn, but a better reading than either might be *qidad*, thongs cut from untanned skins, which is orthographically easier. The poet is unlikely to commend his tribe for eating hair, but to eat leather at a time of famine would show endurance of hardship.

Mu'āwiyah b. Abī Rabī'ah al-Jarmī said about *qurrah* (flour mixed with hair), reviling Banū Asad and folk of Hawāzin, the sons of al-Qamaliyyah:[965]

Did you not see Jarm went to Najd, while your father
Was with the lice (*qaml*) entering al-Uqayṣir's pit.[966]
When flour with hair mixed came, he would say, "Pass it down
Without the lice. *I'm* a humble Hawāzin man".

Qurāmah is shavings and filings of horn, hooves and camel-pads. *'Ilhiz* are ticks[967] ground down and kneaded with blood. *Qurrah* is blood mixed with hair. A man of them would not shave his head without a handful of flour (sprinkled) over it, to act as alms for the desperate in need and purification to him. Anyone who took that flour to eat was shamed.

On the eating of serpents Ibn Munādhir[968] says:

Beware, you, lush river land[969]—go not near
For there do injustice and death decide.
Out of your father's land they drove you forth
To eat roast vipers where you now reside.

965. *Qamaliyyah* means "of short stature" and despised on this account. *Qaml* is louse/lice. In the verses following it is a play on the proper name and *qaml*, lice. Hawāzin are descended from Qays.

966. The *Lisān al-'Arab* explains this verse on the authority of Ibn al-Kalbī: "Hawāzin and Banū Asad were reviled for eating *qurrah*. This was that the Yemen folk would shave their heads at Mina and they would put, each man, a handful of flour on his head and when they had shaved their heads the hair fell off with this flour, and they would make this flour into alms. People of Asad and Qays used to take this flour and the hair with it, throw away the hair and get the benefit of the flour." "Your father" would be the ancestor of the two tribes. Uqayṣir was an idol of Qudā'ah, Lakhm, Judham, 'Abd al-Shams, 'Āmilah and Ghaṭafān, to which they used to make the pilgrimage. According to Yāqūt's version these tribes would shave off their hair in this way and before they threw the flour (*qurrah*) on their hair, Hawāzin would come and ask for it, saying: "Give it me, I'm a humble Hawāzin man." But if he was not given it, he took the hair along with the lice and flour in it and ate it. Uqayṣir was in the upper parts of Syria (Mashārif al-Sha'm) with cairns/pillars (*anṣāb*) around his sanctuary which was probably a *ḥaram*, sacred enclave. There was evidently a pit in front of Uqaysir as also there was one in front of the Meccan god Hubal. The poet seems to indicate that the shaving took pace in the pit. Yāqūt quotes six verses of this poem and draws on Hishām b. al-Kalbī, (*Les Idoles*, ed. and trans. by Wahib Attallah, Paris, 1969, 32 and 40–1). The latter reads for *ḥafr*, pit, *jafr*, a well wider at the bottom than at the top.

An alternative for hemistich no. 2 in *al-Ḥayawān* runs: "Was with the hair, engaged in clipping the matted oiled hair".

967. *Sic* in al-Ḥājirī's text, but I propose reading *al-qidād in turaḍḍ*, changing a *rā'* into a *dāl*, defined by al-Harawī, 899, as *laḥm idhā qudda kāna mithla 'l-suyūr*, meat when cut into strips is like thongs. The phrase would then read: "'*Ilhiz* is meat cut into strips, pounded and kneaded with blood." The *Ṣiḥāḥ*, however, defines it as "what they used to prepare from blood and camel-hair (*wabar al-ba'īr*) and eat in years of famine."

968. Muḥammad b. Munadhir of Banū Yarbū', a Tamīm poet of Basrah from an Aden family, client (*mawla*) class. He came to study at Basrah but fell out with the Mu'tazilites of the city who forbade him to enter the mosque. He is mainly a satirist of his contemporaries, but composed eulogistic poems on the Barmecides and the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd. A biting reply to one of his satires led him to leave Basrah for Mecca.

969. Part of the land near al-Sawād (Iraq) of the land of the Arabs.

On eating thongs of untanned skin al-Quṭāmī[970] said:

Turban-muffled I came, through a scattered shower,
A dark starless night, wind-buffeted here and there,
On an ugly old hag lighting the fire after
Darkness had enfolded (us) from ev'ry quarter.
Greeting I gave her—the greeting did not please her
But such is the duty of a night-come stranger.
200 And when, bandying words, we talked, I asked of her,
"Who are the tribe?"—"A Muḥārib band," her answer,
"Who roast strips of goat-hide through every winter
Although the sown land of folk isn't so far further."[971]

Al-Rā'ī[972] said:

Mundhir wept,[973] unable to entertain hunger-stricken folk,
Ṭāriq, famished, his waist-cloth round his innards hitches tight,
To a fire glow kindled by folks toasting thongs of goat-hide
For guests may be hosted—goat-hide thongs a-toasting despite.

They may be restricted over drink, apart from blood drawn from the veins of a she-camel and liquid from a camel's stomach, while on raids or journeys, and commend a man who gives preference over himself to another, while not criticizing a man who takes his share of it. It (i.e. the restricted drink) is water of the *muṣāfanah*,[974] the *muṣāfanah* being the sharing of this water itself. Namely—when water was insufficient to quench (their thirst), they apportioned it out in equal shares, the chief and the chief entitled to a quarter of booty,[975] prior choice from it and anything left over after the division (which cannot be divided), receiving no

970. 'Umayr b. Shuyaym b. 'Amr, of the Christian Taghlib tribe of the Jazīrah province of Iraq of the Umayyad period. He was involved in the disputes between Qays on one hand and Taghlib and the Yemen on the other, at one time being taken prisoner and losing his property for a while. He is described as a *faḥl*, stallion, outstanding poet. The Muḥārib woman did not entertain him, so he satirizes her.

971. It would not be difficult for them to obtain a supply of grain but they have not much in the way of sustenance (*khayr*).

972. 'Ubayd b. Ḥuṣayn al-Numayrī, an early Islamic poet, a notable of his tribe but obscene in his satire on his own tribes-folk. He participated as a poet in the troubles between Qays and Taghlib. In the poetic rivalry between al-Farazdaq and Jarīr, so famous in the Umayyad period, he took the side of al-Farazdaq.

973. The *Ḥamāsah* reads *mu'wiz*, poor, for Mundhir of the Köprülü text, and explains the hemistich as: "The poor man weeps for fear his poverty will make him unable to entertain his guest". *Ṭāriq* is a traveller by night. As it stands it can be taken in the sense: "Mundhir wept that he should be entertained by generous folk unable to entertain him because of their poverty" ('Awāmirī–Jārim). There is a sort of antithesis between the hungry host and guest.

974. *Muṣāfanah*—water is divided by placing a pebble in a drinking vessel and pouring into it as much water as would cover it.

975. The Prophet received a fifth of the booty (Qur'ān, viii, 41).

more than the meanest of the tribe. This characteristic and noble quality was general among chiefs. Al-Farazdaq said:

When we shared the water from the small skin leathern,
To me hastened bloated 'Anbarī's[976] skin shrunken,
At such a time, had Ḥātim been with the tribesmen,
Ḥātim, generous, had himself withheld it then.[977]

The poet commends Ka'b b. Māmah[978] for his conduct in preferring another to himself when he made over his share (of water) to al-Namarī, saying:

In time of thirst, of commonalty none there was, gave more
Wine mixed with water into the goblet,[979] when cooled, to pour,
Then Ibn Māmah, Ka'b, until the decree of the fates, grim,
Found no way to slay him save in lava-land to burn him.
Ka'b looked on at the water. Then they gave to him the call,
"Ka'b—water! You've come to water." But he came not at all.

201 On *muṣāfanah* al-Asadī says:

As if Uṭayṭ, you daughter of the tribe, had never couched
Young camels resembling a trimmed curved (bow-stave), fine to ride.
Nor had Fārisī[980] let a tribe drink, over the pebbles,
Water left in skins, while the couching beasts lean to the side.

They affirm that the pebble which, when the water in the vessel covers it, constitutes the share of a single one of them, is called the *maqlah*. I have heard this term from the Baghdadis but I have not heard it from my friends,[981] so I am absolved of responsibility to you for it.

On *muṣāfanah* Ibn Jaḥwash said:

976. Al-'Anbarī was the head of the tribe al-'Anbar b. 'Amr b. Tamīm. A verse omitted here says al-'Anbarī (when he came to me) brought a large stone, the size of his head, to drink the tribe's water amid the sand-dunes (al-Mubarrad, *al-Kāmil* i, 200). He was a great trencherman "red and bloated (*mumtali'*)". Al-Mubarrad seems to indicate his whole body was shrunken (wrinkled?). His hastening, it is implied, was in a rather plaintive manner.

977. This verse is also cited on p. 144 with the story of Ibn Māmah.

978. Ka'b was in the Dahnā' with a party in the heat of summer and they were thirsty but had little water. They shared it out in the manner described. Ka'b gave his share to Shamir b. Mālik al-Namarī. As death came to him he alighted in the shade of a tree. They said to him: "We're coming to water, come to water Ka'b. You've arrived at water." The saying became proverbial for generosity regardless of self.

979. *Nājūd*, a word of Aramaic origin.

980. Reading Fārisī with Köprülü, a Persian, perhaps a proper name or a slave. The last hemistich seems to imply that the camels are leaning on their forelegs which fold in the first part of the action of couching, to be followed by the hind legs. It seems that in their haste to drink they did not wait until the camels were completely couched. Or it might mean that the camels, also thirsty, stretched their necks towards where the water was being doled out.

981. The urban society of Basrah.

As the water-skin to each other in turn we handed[982]
The same bloated ʿAnbarī rushed to the water. When
I saw the state he was in, my share abandoned, instead
I chose to give it him, fearing reproaches reach me—then,
Along he brings a great stone of his as large as his head.
To quaff, amid the sand dunes, the share of the tribesmen.

Such distress may befall the tribes in their steppes and places as has never been heard of in any (other) community or in any (other) region. Indeed, one of them will be so famished that he will bind a stone round his belly and resort to tightly fastening the places where he ties his waist-wrapper, and pulling his turban from his head to bind it round his belly. His turban is no less than his crown[983] and the bedouin Arab without a turban feels a coldness that no others experience, because of his long attachment to the turban with its being wound many times round and repeated twists. In fact, he sometimes puts on two turbans. Sometimes it is wound round a *qalansuwah*-cap night-black (in colour)—Muṣʿab b. ʿUmayr al-Laythī[984] said:

Set out, for the shades of night have fallen on you.
Wretched the man who, with ʿĀṣim hoped to be guest.
To him, prowling, furtive, hyena-like, we came,
Tight'ning the turbans round our hollow bellies pressed.

202 On this theme al-Rāʿī said:

Flares a blaze for a bunch of riders, some fallen behind,
So toward the fire-glow all made, a-thrusting through the night,
Glow of a fire kindled by folk toasting thongs of goat-hide.
For guests may be hosted—goat-hide thongs a-toasting despite!
And when, camels couched there, our ill case to them we pleaded
They wept—each side wept—sad because of their unhappy plight—
Mundhir, unable to entertain hunger-stricken folk,
Ṭāriq, famished, his waist-cloth round his innards hitches tight.[985]

One of the things pointing to the distress they underwent and their commendation of preferring another to oneself is what al-Ghanawī[986] said:

982. This line is very similar to that attributed to al-Farazdaq on the preceding page. Al-Mubarrad attributes this and the third line to al-Farazdaq.

983. Cf. the saying "The turban is the crown of the Arabs".

984. Muṣʿab b. ʿUmayr b. Hāshim b. ʿAbd al-Manāf of Quraysh, an early convert to Islam, a man of valour, fought at Badr and was slain at Uḥud where he was the Prophet's standard bearer, in year 3/624–5 by Ibn Qamīʾah al-Laythī. Muṣʿab is not called al-Laythī elsewhere so unless a different person is intended this would be an error of the part of al-Jāḥiẓ.

985. These two verses repeated from the previous page. Al-Ḥājirī again reads *muʿwiz* for Mundhir.

986. Ṭufayl b. ʿAwf b. Kaʿb of the Ghaniyy b. Aʿsar, a section of Qays b. ʿAylān, the latter the pre-Islamic ancestor of a number of ʿAdnān (northern Arab) tribes. Ṭufayl was a notable pre-Islamic poet, a stallion (*faḥl*) contemporary with al-Nābighah al-Jaʿdi and Zuhayr b. Abī Sūlmā (see note 884). He died about thirteen years before Islam and is famed for his descriptions of horses.

Qays b. 'Aylān has learned surely that we,
Where their tent-pole is planted are hard wood, stout.[987]
When, today passed, milk is with water mixed,
And, gen'rous or mean, a heart is tried out.
We're guest bowls when tamarisk's eaten fresh
And earth's living things[988] stricken all by drought.

On the same theme al-'Ujayr al-Salūlī[989] said:

From the women giving water with water mixed,
After ev'ry refugee from famine, arrived,
Repast long delayed,[990] has tossed the food bowls aside.

On a like theme another said:

Camels have we that quench our children on a day,
Beasts three, but four, and there be more, upon a day.
(Milk)[991] water'd we feed them, despising them no way
But if a thing's scarce we add to it what we may.
Yet those (guests come newly), arriving at their tent,
Sup upon meat until their hunger be all spent.

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī[992] said: "I took a stone and from hunger tied it upon my belly and came to the Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, to beg of him. When I heard him delivering a sermon in which (he said): 'He who abstains from that which is unlawful, Allah will make abstinent and he who asks for help Allah will help,' I went back without begging from him."

A bedouin Arab said: "I was so hungry that I heard a buzzing in my ears. Then
203 I went out to look for game / and lo and behold there was a cave and in it a wolf cub. So I killed and ate it, rubbed its fat[993] on myself and made myself sandals (out of its hide)."

987. The exact interpretation of these verses is a little obscure. *Nuḍār* is (*inter alia*) tall straight wood, used for making bowls. But Naḍād is one of the mountains of the Ghaniyy tribe—the confusion r/d is common. So one might understand the verse as "Qays has learned surely that we are Naḍār and that we are where their pole has been planted".

988. Living things—Arabic *junūd*, the species of created things by which God effects his purpose (Lane, *Lexicon*, 469). These last two hemistichs are open to other interpretations.

989. The father of the poet al-Farazdaq, a poet of the Banū Salūl of the Umayyad period, a bedouin poet born and brought up in the desert.

990. Lit. "every refugee . . . and host delaying the entertainment of the guest has tossed aside the (empty) bowls." It is ordinary custom in parts of tribal south Arabia to toss one's empty cup to the middle of the room for collection.

991. The context requires "milk" to be understood. "Hunger" is an interpretation of *sharr*, evil, ill, poverty.

992. Sa'd b. Mālik b. Sinān of Khazraj, a Companion of the Prophet, from whom a large number of Traditions on the Prophet came. He died in 54/674 or 58/677–8.

993. It is still a habit to rub the fat on one's hands after eating meat on, for instance, one's calves, at least in tribal areas.

When al-Mughīrah came to Sa'd at al-Qādisiyyah[994] with seventy camels, Sa'd being in severe straits, they slaughtered them at once and ate their flesh, rubbed themselves with their fat and made sandals out of their hides.

Al-Aṣmā'ī recounted on the authority of 'Uthmān al-Shaḥḥām[995] from Abū 'l-Rajā' al-'Uṭāridī who said: "When we heard that the Prophet, Allah bless and honour him, had begun to kill (his foes), we fled and roasted a hare's thigh buried in hot cinders, throwing our rendered fat on it—and I shall never forget that meal!" Al-Aṣmā'ī would say when he related this Tradition: "What a fine sauce hunger is[996] and what a good slogan for the Muslims is making light (of things)."

They recount on the authority of 'Abd al-Mālik b. 'Umayr[997] from a man of Banū 'Udhrah who said: "I went to visit maternal uncles of mine in Hajar[998] and there they were, on soft red ground at the end of a projecting hump of land, at the rising of the moon. They mentioned that a female onager would come time and again to a palm tree, raising its fore-legs and lifting its mouth to take the part-ripe dates, the wholly ripe dates, the half-ripe dates and those beginning to ripen. So I slung my bow over my shoulder and belted on my large quiver. There it was approaching—so I shot it and it fell dead, muzzle to the ground. I came up (to it), cut a piece[999] out of its belly and (cut away) the place of the mane. Then I lit my fire with flint and steel and collected my firewood[1000] and buried it (the onager). Then the sort of sleep that overcomes youth overtook me and I only woke up as the sun's heat (fell on) my back. Then I uncovered it and there—it gave out from the fat a braying (that sounded) like the Ṭayyi', Ghuṭayf and Ghaṭafān[1001] tribes' summons of one another to war. Then I went up to the ripe dates but the dawn cold had spoiled[1002] them, so I picked the dates beginning to ripen and the part-ripe dates and set to placing a lump of fat between two ripe dates and a ripe date between two lumps of fat and to think of the lump of fat as a little ghee, then as refined

994. al-Mughīrah b. Shu'bah (note 367) and Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ, the famous Companion of the Prophet and general at the Battle of Qādisiyyah at which the Persians were routed. See *EI*^{2} Ḳādisiyya.

995. Abū Salamah 'Uthmān al-Shaḥḥām, a narrator of Tradition at Basrah. Al-'Uṭāridī, Zarir/Yazīd, there is some doubt about his name, was a reliable Traditionist of the 1st *hijrah* century, a Basran.

996. Cf. the Spartan "Hunger is the best sauce".

997. A Traditionist of Kufah of the 1st and early 2nd *hijrah* century, who became qadi of Kufah in the governorship of al-Ḥajjāj. He is said to have been a Yemeni Arab and good Arabic speaker, but for some reason he was nicknamed al-Qibṭī, the Copt.

998. Hajar is the ancient capital of al-Ḥasā' in al-Baḥrayn province. Perhaps these Banū 'Udhrah are the sub-tribe of 'Abdullāh b. Ghaṭafān.

999. Presumably the entrails.

1000. Perhaps he means that he took away the firewood, leaving the hot cinders and placed the onager flesh on top of them covering the pit (in which they must have been) with earth, just as one can see done today.

1001. Ghuṭayf b. Hārithah is a tribe of Ṭayyi' and Ghaṭafān were in the Mountain of Ṭayyi' area. He seems to mean a rallying cry. Ghuṭayf is perhaps the head (*abū*) of Ghaṭafān.

1002. *Ḍaraba*, to strike, is the technical term for the cold or frost spoiling fruits etc.

ghee and, from its sweetness, to reckon it a lump of honey I bring down from the mountain."

I am suspicious of this tale because it contains matter of which it is impossible that an Arab acquainted with the ways of the world would speak—it is a tale of al-Haytham.[1003]

A Medinan said to a bedouin Arab: "What do you leave (i.e., not eat) and what do you eat?" "We eat", he said, "whatever creeps and walks apart from the *umm ḥubayn*."[1004] To this the Medinan replied: "Good health to the *umm ḥubayn*."

Al-Aṣmaʿī said: "A Bedouin Arab picked a bone clean and when he wanted to
204 throw it away, he having three sons, one of them said: / "Give it me." "What will you do with it?" he asked. "I shall pick it (so) clean that not even an ant will find a place for a siesta in it," he replied. "You've said nothing," was his comment. Then the second (son) said to him: "Give it me." "And what will *you* do with it?" he asked. "I shall pick it (so) clean that it won't be realized whether that (happened) this year or the preceding year," he replied. "You've said nothing," he commented. Said the third son: "Give it me." "And what will *you* do with it?" he asked. "I shall make the marrow of it the sauce for it," he answered. "It's yours," said he.

The other said:

You in no way resemble Laqīṭ[1005] and his deed
Even although food of rice with dates you should feed.

The other said:[1006]

When a part of (the pot) is cracked, for it you will not find
One who'll mend the part with its (edges) nearly closed, to bind.
If try they do, by closing up the cracks, you'll see that it
Has but added places several more where it is split.
Unable to move, it rose not to a watch-hill[1007] higher
Nor did it mount the three blackened trivet stones[1008] of the fire
Nor yet crosses from the region of Mecca, a great way,
To us. Nor tawny camels through a wadi it convey.
But its provenance original is from Mosul town,
Neighbour to a mighty flood from the river flowing down.

1003. Al-Haytham b. ʿAdiyy al-Ṭāʾī of Kufah was a prominent *shuʿūbī* (anti-Arab) in his day, secretary to the Caliph al-Maʾmūn and Director of the latter's academy known as the Khizānat al-Ḥikmah, Treasury of Wisdom, at Baghdad. Author of a *Book of Scandals* he is said to have transmitted weak and fabricated traditions. He was a reporter of history and Arab verse also, flourishing from 103–207/721–822. Al-Jaḥiẓ is undoubtedly correct in considering the aforegoing tale as a fabrication.

1004. *Umm ḥubayn*, the chameleon.

1005. See p. 168, note 778.

1006. Ibn Qutaybah, quoting this poem, prefaces it with two lines which al-Jāḥiẓ quotes on p. 208, commencing: "Many is the chipped pot, broken-rimmed . . ."

1007. A *marqab* is a place from which one can look out and where one can be seen. It would be honourable for the pot to be placed in a conspicuous place where it can be seen and attract guests.

1008. The three stones of the fire to hold the cooking pot. One still sees three used today.

To us it came, paddles propelling it gently along
As they follow the while behind the straight punt-poles[1009] strong.
And I said: "To whom belong these cooking pots that I spy
On which the wind scatters sand with debris and dust to lie?"
Answered they: "Is it hid from any onlooker aware?
The cooking pots of (Banū) Raqāsh,[1010] if one looks with care."
So I said: "When do your cook-pots acquaintance with meat make?"
Answered they: "When not given out in loan[1011] (for others' sake),
At one Feast of Sacrifices, then not till next comes round,
And else they are (covered with) spider webs as now they are found."
Then, when the distress on their faces showed clearly to me
And their suffering, I brought them into my family.
When, to see me, they raised their eyes as I was drawing near,
All in hubbub gestured, calling on each other to hear.[1012]

205 Among what they say by of description of their cook-pots, large bowls (for entertaining) and food is what I am writing down for you. If they live in a droughty land they are of folk the most well off in (a time of) plentiful herbage. So do not suppose that all of the commendation they give to their cook-pots, large bowls, *tharīd* and date-cakes is untrue.

Al-Aṣmaʿī told me saying: "I asked al-Muntajiʿ b. Nabhān[1013] about the land of the Bedouins rich in vegetation and he said: 'You will perhaps have seen a dog pass by ghee[1014] when it is lying before it (for the taking), being replete.' " Al-Afwah al-Awdī[1015] said:

May a bowl of Thaʿlabah b. Qays please[1016]
From which hungry, in winter come, find ease,

1009. The punt-poles used as rudders?

1010. Ibn Durayd, *Ishtiqāq*, 282, Banū Raqāsh, evidently a district, at Basrah.

1011. I understand *ʿawāriyā* as plural of *ʿāriyyah*, loan, with the poetic licence of an accusative termination. The sense is that unless the pots are loaned to cook meat for others they only come into use once a year at the Feast of Sacrifices. This is an insult to the tribe, but there may well be an element of truth in it as the poor rarely eat meat except at feasts.

1012. The poem is somewhat unusual and is a lampoon on Banū Raqāsh. The author, Muḥammad b. Yasīr al-Riyāshī (p. 208) (early 3rd century?) never left Basrah. See Pellat, *Milieu*, 170. It has a southern Iraqi touch and there may be nuances in it no longer possible to appreciate.

1013. A narrator of verse, a bard. A Sindhi wearing an ear-ring, he came to the desert as a boy and is described by al-Jāḥiẓ as more "eloquent" than Ru'bah b. ʿAjjāj the *rajaz*-jingle poet.

1014. *Khulāṣah* (*al-samn*), ghee into which some dates or parched barley or wheat has been thrown to clarify it, or inspissated juice of dates, etc. (Lane, *Lexicon*, 786). If can also be the remains of the aforegoing in a cooking pot.

1015. Salā'ah b. ʿAmr b. Mālik, Lord of the ʿAwd of Najrān in the Yemen, a famous arbiter, leader in battle and poet of the Jāhiliyyah. He is one of the Arabians to whom the first *qaṣīdah* ode is attributed. The ʿAwd may be the ancestors of the present ʿAwdhillah tribe, (*ob. c.* 570).

1016. *Tahnā lī* . . . has the sense of "Good appetite to Thaʿlabah b. Qays". Several tribes of this name are noted in W. Caskel, *Gamharat an-nasab*, II, 551. The tent is blackened by the smoke of cooking fires, the ladles are never borrowed because they are in constant use. When the bucket comes to the top of the well it is tugged by a cord to tip the water into a trough (*ḥawḍ*) from which animals

With ladles, never borrowed, and a tent
Blackened in its fabric, unpatched the rent.
As the circle of ladles in that tent
Were bucket cords (tugged) to spill their content.

Alluding to Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ's[1017] cauldron, Ma'n b. Aws,[1018] in part of his eulogy on him, said:

Host to guests in winter dearth whose cauldrons, turned on their side,
Are ever being dumped, then made once more the fire to ride.
When over them the kindlers stand, you see the fire they raise
To speed their entertainment, made with branches large to blaze.
When fiercely up the cauldrons boil, you hear a bubbling sound
Like camels roaring, too weak to rise, forced up from the ground
An entire great humped nine-year-old camel, you will see crammed
Into the bottom of the cauldron, close-packed, tightly jammed.
Within its sides, it seems, (meat of) camels black streaked with white,
In the surge as it swells up to the brim, is lost to sight.
The (meat) looks like, as the waves in the cauldron lap and slap,
Dark refugees in the camp taking a siesta nap.[1019]
When, in the cauldron, up start the waves, by the boiling sent,
A shudder seems to shake it from the movement violent.
The great cauldrons ever provide, unmoved, firmly standing,[1020]
For anyone who derives from them his bread and his living.

206 Al-Farazdaq came as a guest to Abu 'l-Samḥā' Suḥaym b. 'Āmir one of the Banū 'Amr b. Marthad and found him worthy to have a panegyric composed on him. In commending him he spoke of his cauldron, saying:

Of Abu 'l-Samḥā' we asked, till at last we came
To the night-time travellers' haven[1021] best by far.
(To him) we said: "O Abu 'l-Samḥā' we have found

1017. Sa'īd b. al-'Āṣ was one of the lords of the Banū Umayyah whom the Caliph 'Uthmān made governor of Kufah for a time, though he eventually replaced him. He died in 59/678–9. His generosity is highly praised.

1018. Ma'n b. Aws is reckoned one of the "stallions", most eminent of poets, of the era spanning the end of the age of "Ignorance" and Islam. He was of the Muzaynah tribe located between Mecca and Medinah. He went to Syria and spent some time in Basrah but soon returned to bedouin life. He composed panegyrics on notables in Medina.

1019. 'Awāmir–Jārim, following Van Vloten, read this line differently, understanding it as "Horses, dark, that had been away returning to the camping place", but the Köprülü reading does not support this and al-Ḥājirī's reading also must be accounted conjectural.

1020. 'Awāmirī–Jārim make *rawāsī-hā* refer to the camels' (meat), but a *qidr rāsiyah* means a supported cauldron which does not move. In the following line *ma'āsh* would mean livelihood, daily bread.

1021. *Maṭrūq*, come to by night, knocked, (of door) so "place come to by night" or "(door) knocked at".

The Azd (as gen'rous hosts) go further than Nizār."[1022]
And in his haste up he came toward us, dragging
Trails of blood of large she-camels with the *izār*,[1023]
And up he rose to the finest wine (in a jar),
Standing bloody-nosed,[1024] broken open, sealed with tar,
Passed round among them while the cauldron boils—in which
(Lumps) of the plump white humps of high-humped camels are,
As if, looking at the bits of hump cut in strips,
They, like virgins peeping down upon virgins are.

Al-Kumayt[1025] said in description of a cauldron:

(Like) geese into deep waters a-dipping,
At times disappearing, at times floating,
As if the sound that comes when they're boiling
Were Aslam jingles Ghifār lampooning.[1026]

Concerning what they say by way of description of cauldrons and of some folk's insulting others, it is like what Muḥammad b. Yasīr[1027] quoted to me, saying: "When the one said:

We have a cauldron two cubits in width
By (some) cubits and handspans more in depth.

the other said: 'What's (all) this? Allah's shame on such a cauldron as this. But I say:

A place I made for my cauldron, setting it high
Twixt Mayth and Ajra', [1028] on a hill for all to see.

1022. The Azd, to which Abu 'l-Samḥā' belonged, are the southern, Yemeni, Arabs and Nizār the northern Arabs. The rivalry between the two is well known and has still left its traces up to the present day.

1023. 'Awāmirī–Jārim read *al-'ināṣ* as a plural of *'ans*, fat camels. The picture is of Abu 'l-Samḥā', using his shoulder-cloth (*izār*) either as a rope to drag along limbs of the slaughtered camel trailing blood, or, less likely, with chunks of camel-meat inside it. Yemenites to this day use the shoulder-cloth that normally hangs around the neck and down the shoulders for all sorts of purposes for which they have to improvise containers, etc.

1024. i.e. pouring out red wine.

1025. Al-Kumayt b. Zayd b. Khunays/Akhnas of Sa'd b. Tha'labah of Asad was born in Kufah in 60/679 and turned to Zaydī Shi'ism, his most famous verse being *al-Hāshimiyyat* in praise of the Prophet, 'Alī, Ḥusayn and Zayd, the latter's descendants. He was anti-south Arabs (Qaḥṭānīs) and attacked their poets. He died towards the end of the Umayyad period in 126/743 or the following year.

1026. There are several tribes of this name (see 'Umar Riḍā Kaḥḥālah, *Mu'jam*, 25 seq.), mainly Yemeni Qaḥṭānī. Ghifār should be the tribe of the Kinānah group, 'Adnānīs, northern Arabs.

1027. Composer of the poem on p. 204, see note 1012.

1028. *Mayth*, soft sandy soil: *ajra'*, a hill, one side of sand and one of stones, etc. but both are probably simply toponyms. *Haḍb al-Rijām* means an isolated hill of reddish stones with large stones on top of it. Ṭakhfah/Ṭikhfah is a long brown mountain opposite which are wells and a spring, but it is a place or places known to a number of poets.

And as trivets to it Haḍb al-Rijām I set
Below it, Ṭakhfah and Ghawl, immovable, three,
For (my) cauldron, black as night its underside,
Wherein an elephant you might see, floating, free.[1029]
To the guest promptly the fat of the hump is brought
And all folk coming will gorge to satiety!' "

207 Abū 'Ubaydah said: "And when al-Farazdaq said:

Cauldrons like the ostrich's chest, under them poked
Stumps of wood, branches removed, with which fire is stoked.

Maysarah Abu 'l-Dardā' said: 'And what of the ostrich's chest? *Wallāhi*, this wouldn't fill al-Farazdaq's (belly)! But I say:

Many the cauldron, dark as night,[1030] I have stoked to the boil
In which you'd see an elephant floating, not cut up, whole!' "

'Abdullāh b. al-Zubayr[1031] said in praise of Asmā' b. Khārijah:[1032]

Glory, do you not see, has sent to seek
An ally true, whose oath to keep will bind.
Asmā', Ḥiṣn's son, it has chosen, whose hands,
Right and left, are with noble actions lined,[1033]
(Upon whose table joints and legs, carved from
Bactria's two hump'd camels, you will find.)

And what it is permissable (to introduce) into this category, even if they do not contain any description of a cauldron, are the words of al-Farazdaq on al-'Udhāfir b. Zayd, one of the Banū Taym al-Lāt b. Tha'labah:[1034]

By your life (I swear) (our) daily bread,[1035] measured out,
Would not surpass 'Udhāfir's table in plenty.

1028. *(continued)* Doughty, *Travels*, ii, 493 passed by Tokhfa, "a considerable mountain of granite" and watered at "el-Ghrol in hollow ground amidst trap mountains". Ghawl and Rijām are described by Yāqūt as two mountains "and it is said al-Ghawl is known water . . . in the Jawf of Takhfah". These places lie about three days' caravan journey west of Qaṣīm on the Mecca road.

1029. Lit. not cut up into pieces, whole.

1030. Lit. "like the last third of the night".

1031. 'Abdullāh b. al-Zubayr al-Asadī came from a famiły of poets. He was born and lived in Kufah and was one of the poets of the Umayyad dynasty of which he was a supporter, most of his verse being on Asmā'. He was a satirist whose tongue was feared. He lived up to the time of al-Ḥajjāj.

1032. Asmā' b. Khārijah b. Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfah al-Fazārī, a noble of Kufah contemporary with the previous, one of three outstandingly generous men of the city.

1033. i.e. his hands are always giving.

1034. Taym al-Lāt b. Tha'labah are of Khazraj, reckoned southern Qaḥṭānīs, of Medina. The Prophet changed their name from al-Lāt (the pre-Islamic goddess) to Taym Allāh. 'Udhāfir is called by Ibn Durayd, *Ishtiqāq*, a noble (*sharīf*) in Islam.

1035. *Arzaq*, provided by Allah.

Should the Dajjāl[1036] and his hosts, uninvited guests,
Come seeking of his baker hospitality
With all Gog and Magog's[1037] multitudes, ravening—
These a whole month his noonday meal would satisfy.

Ibn ʿAbdal[1038] said of Bishr b. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam.[1039]

Had Bishr so desired, there below his gate would stand
Black men uncouth of speech or red Slavs, at hand.
But Bishr so easy of access has made his gate
It will to him praise and reward facilitate.
Eyes ranging, not fearing comers unexpected,
His gaze by house gates and screen is undeflected.

208 They spoke of cauldrons in "flyting" verses of theirs. Al-Raqāshī[1040] said:

We have, of Allah's gift, a dark cauldron fire-black,
Of which partake the nearest, then those further back.
Alāl, al-Rijām and Ṭikhfah[1041] we made for it
Trivets (three) on which our cauldron should proudly sit
To render, on our part, to Muḥammad, his right.
Whenever to us he comes to us famished, in sad plight,
Ibn Yasīr[1042] came seeking solace from his sorrow.
If he comes not at night, at dawn on the morrow.

1036. Al-Dajjāl, a word of Syriac origin, a miraculous person who will appear a little before the end of time and after tyrannizing the World will be slain by Jesus, after which the whole World will be converted to Islam. Al-Dajjāl does not figure in the Qur'ān. For the various ideas about this anti-Christ see the *Shorter Encyclopaedia*, 67 and *EI*^{2}.

1037. Gog and Magog are twice mentioned in the Qur'ān. See p. 190 and note 902. Al-Bayḍāwī says they are two tribes of Yāfith (Japheth) b. Nūḥ, and that it is averred that Gog is of the Turks and Magog of the Jīl (Gīlān).

1038. Al-Ḥakam b. ʿAbd al-Asadī al-Ghādirī, a poet of the Umayyad dynasty, stayed in Kufah till the Umayyad governors were driven out by Ibn al-Zubayr. He went to Syria where he became a sort of boon companion of the Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān. He was lame and a hunchback but his tribe the Banū Ghādirah were known for their wit and amusing anecdotes. He was a satirist with a nasty (*khabīth*) tongue which people feared. In Syria he associated with Bishr b. Marwān and when Bishr moved to Basrah he went with him.

1039. Bishr b. Marwān was brother to the Umayyad Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik who made him governor of Kufah, to which subsequently he added Basrah. The historian al-Balādhurī describes him as lenient in disposition. His court was thronged by the famous poets of the Umayyad period and he was given to drinking with boon companions. He moved to Basrah in 74/693–4 where he died shortly after.

1040. Al-Ḥājirī identifies al-Raqāshī with al-Faḍl b. ʿAbd al-Ṣamad, a poet of a dissolute and obscene type like Abū Nuwās and others who lived a life of frivolity which found expression in their verse. He was devoted to the Barmecides and remained one of the few loyal to them, extolling them and visiting them in prison. He matched insults with Abū Nuwās whose *Dīwān* contains some of his lampoons on al-Raqāshī, but little of the latter's verse has been preserved.

1041. See p. 206 and note 1028.

1042. i.e. Muḥammad b. Yasīr, see note 97.

Ibn Yasīr retorted[1043]:

Many is the chipped pot, broken-rimmed, in which,
That apart, none sees a fault evident,
On seeing my face one calls to the other
Here comes the Yasīrī—joyful event!

On the same theme Ibn Yasīr said:

Not with chisel did they Raqāshī's cauldron grave
Like folk's cauldrons, nor quarried was it from a cave.
Abū Hafṣ' pot, be its ancestor traced one day,
Is step-daughter to the marsh-reeds and river clay.[1044]

Abū Nuwās al-Ḥasan b. Hānī' al-Ḥakamī intervened between them, alluding also to al-Raqāshī's cook-pot in a lampoon:

Many the cook-pot Raqāsh sets on trivets in winter
Fire-blackened, by its handles hoist—to children the mother.[1045]
Of which the top could be choked by the midriff of a gnat!
Raqāsh with ease takes it down—no cloth needs he to hold that!
Should you come on it, full with freshly chopped meat, without pains
You could extract with a toothpick stick all that it contains.
It is the cook-pot—the cook-pot of Shaykh Bakr b. Wā'il,[1046]
Protector[1047] of orphans in any year of leanness ill!

209 Of it he also said:

Folk's blackened cooking pots I've seen, set over fires alight,
But bright as the new moon is that of the Raqāshī, white.
If, filled with fresh chopped meat, you come on them, you would not fail
Their contents to bring out on the tip of a finger nail.
Before their (tents), to the questing guest, there reveal[1048] their pots
Trivets (three)—like the three dots ink to letter *thā'* allots.
The fire-stick poker for the pots in evidence is found
Quite uncharred by the burning coals, intact indeed and sound
The scent wafted, the Ribāb, Dārim and Sa'd tribes receive,

1043. The retort is in the same metre and rhyme as the lampoon as is obligatory in such case.

1044. i.e. the cauldron or cook-pot is cheap, of clay, not of stone and fired with reeds as fuel.

1045. Because it feeds them. Raqāsh is able to lift it without a cloth because it has not been on the fire.

1046. A great tribe of 'Adnān, the northern Arabs, their territories extending from Yamāmah to Baḥrayn and the borders of the Sawād of Iraq, al-Ubullah and Hīt. See Caskel in *EI*^{2}.

1047. Protector, *rabī'* for which see *Glossaire datînois*, 1091, but *rabī'* also means "spring", a possible sense here.

1048. Ibn Qutaybah read *yuthabbitu-ha*, hold them in place, for the guest etc. which is an easier alternative.

Desiring to partake, come needy folk of Fizr who thieve.[1049]
When they assemble to move camp, (see) who marches afore
Carrying the cook-pots—an ant's child, a yearling, not more!

One of the Tamīmīs said, lampooning Ibn Ḥabbār:[1050]

Could cook-pot weep, by meat ungreased, for long confined,
More tearful than Ibn Ḥabbār's pot you would not find.
Unsmeared by fat since it was molten metal hot,
After the blacksmith's fire no warming has it got.

The Shu'ūbiyyah and Āzādmardiyyah,[1051] who hate the House of the Prophet and those of his Companions who conquered the conquests, killed the Majūs[1052] and brought Islam, exaggerate the hardness of their way of living, the coarseness of their clothing and reduce their comfort and lower their standard of living. They[1053] are of folk the best off when there is rain and the worst off when the clouds are scanty. Till sometimes rain covers the surface of the earth with forage and water and thereat a man with a large family, too poor to feed them properly, says: "Pasture without a sheep to fatten, vegetation without a camel (to eat it)[1054] and fodder at which the liver of a poor man with a large family is in pain." With regard to this their poet said:

Abū Zunayb, the flowing floods have passed you by,
The clouds have watered your pastures generously.

210 When you look into their verse you realize that they ate and recognized good food, because fine fare is to be found only with people of affluence and wheat (*'aysh*) eaters. Alluding to *darmak*, which is refined white wheat *ḥuwwarā* flour, Ziyād b. Fayyāḍ said:

The gallant of Qays b. 'Aylān,[1055] illustrious, she met
When even the brave, the cavaliers, quail at battle threat.

1049. Ribāb were neighbours of Banū Tamīm in al-Dahnā', Dārim of Tamīm, to which also one of the many tribes called Sa'd belonged. Al-Fizr is Sa'd b. Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm. The verse is said in mockery—as if the men of such great tribes would come as guests to such miserable hosts!

1050. Ibn Qutaybah, quoting the same verse, ascribes it to Farazdaq and reads 'Uqbah b. Jabbār al-Minqarī, Jabbār instead of Ḥabbār. The Minqarīs are Tamīmis.

1051. Āzādmardiyyah, lit. Persian Freeman-ship, the Persian name for the Iranian aristocracy of which the Shu'ūbiyyah, the latter term the Iranian nationalists would not use because it is derived from the Qur'ānic phrase, *shu'ūb-an wa-qabā'ila*. The term was used for some of the upper classes of Iranians before and after Islam. Al-Ḥājiri discusses them at some length.

1052. In Arabic a term applied mainly to the Zoroastrians, but it was originally an ancient Iranian priestly class. See *EI*^{2} for a full exposition.

1053. The subject now seems to be the Arabian Bedouin, and the introduction of the Persian anti-Arabs out of context.

1054. See p. 170 for these proverbs. The liver, like the heart, is a seat of the emotions!

1055. Qays b. 'Aylān b. Muḍar of 'Adnān. This large group became so prominent that it is used to describe 'Adnān as a whole, in contra-distinction to the southern Arabs, so that speaks of Qays and Yemen, the north and south Arabs.

Sword in hand he rose up at the couched camels nobly bred.
For fear of his blade the strong young dun ashen camels fled.
A spare hardy she-camel, the sword edge encountering
On three legs she limped, the two-edged blade in her quivering.
So (to them) he fed her, fat, meat and (fine white) *darmak* flour.[1056]
And the nights turned us not aside from him in the darkest hour.

And he also said:

You spend your time amid white *darmak*-bread and fruit
And roast meat when you want, or broth from it, to boot.

Jarīr said:

On me you impose the food on which Āl Zayd live.
Bread fine,[1057] mustard and raisin sauce, who will me give?

Al-Namir b. Tawlab said:

She shall have what she desires, honey refined,
Ghee and fine white flour, if it's to her mind.

Of the most honourable foods with which they were acquainted, and none of them offered that food to folk apart from 'Abdullāh b. Jud'ān,[1058] was *fālūdhaj*,[1059] jellied almond sweetmeats. Umayyah b. Abi 'l-Ṣalt commended him for that, saying:

To massive bowls of hard black *shīzā*-wood
On which heart of wheat mixed with honey stood.

211 They have *tharīd*, commonplace among the nobles, but Hāshim[1060] was supreme in it, when he shredded the bread for his tribe. He has been extolled for this in celebrated verse, namely:

'Amr of high eminence, who for his tribe shredded bread,
One famine year, for men of Mecca, emaciated.

1056. *Darmak* is *ḥuwwārī*, flour of a fine quality (*Nihāyah*). Jarīr bought a slave-girl from a Yamāmah man called Zayd, whom she hated, as also his rough kind of existence—this is the first line of a couplet referring to her.

1057. *Muraffaq*, a wide thin bread. The sauce is called *ṣināb*.

1058. 'Abdullāh b. Jud'ān, a wealthy notable of the Taym b. Murrab clan of Quraysh, engaged in the caravan and slave trade at Mecca in the late 6th century A.D. He is said to have survived into the Prophet's early lifetime. He became proverbial for generosity and was nicknamed "the Sipper of Gold" because he used to drink from a golden cup. See Pellat in *EI*^{2}.

1059. See Appendix 47.

1060. The ancestor of the Prophet, whose name is applied to the Prophet's descendants, the Hashimites. Hāshim, whose name was 'Amr, brought bread to Mecca in a famine year and shredded (*hashama*) it for the tribe to eat. This famous incident is told by Ibn Isḥāq and others. See Guillaume, *Life*, 58.

Ḥays date-cake is a highly appreciated food. Makhzūm[1061] avers that the first person to prepare *ḥays* was Suwayd b. Haramī. The poet said:

When there's a crisis, with it I'm summoned to deal,
When *ḥays* is prepared, to Jundab is the appeal.

Bread is highly thought of in their minds ʿAbdullāh b. Ḥabīb al-ʿAnbarī, one of the Banū Samurah, was nicknamed the Bread-Eater (Ākil al-Khubz) because he would not eat dates and had no desire for milk, he being Lord of Banu 'l-ʿAnbar in his time. When they vaunted (themselves) they said: "Of us is the Eater of Bread and of us is the Protector of Birds," meaning Thawb b. Shaḥmah al-ʿAnbarī.[1062] They give precedence to meat over milk. This is why the poet said:

Should she not bring fresh milk, beat her he would (for this offence).
Some (wives) beating, by one of their in-laws,[1063] experience.

They give meat precedence over milk. Don't you find him (the poet) saying:

On their dates ʿUbayd as hosts fed me, but I fed their men
The hump of a camel unmilked for days,[1064] rarely ridden.
Is hump-fat in winter-time an equivalent repast
To Juwāthā-dates from palms when their frond-branches they've cast?[1065]

Nothing surpasses the slaughtering of a camel and feasting (one's guests) on the hump. Slaughtering (*ʿaqr*, lit. cutting the hocks) is *najdah* (stress) and milk is *risl*.[1066] Al Hudhalī[1067] said:

If only with me were men on foot of Quraym
Fighting or not, they would defend me just the same.

212 Al-Hudhalī also said:

Truly the best of folk when it is a question of gentleness or violence.[1068]

Al-Marrār b. Saʿīd al-Faqʿasī[1069] said:

1061. One of the most prominent tribes of Mecca, engaged in the caravan trade with the Yemen.

1062. See p. 124 and note 546.

1063. *Anṣāb*, mothers-in-law or *nāqah*?

1064. *Muṣarrāh*, left unmilked for days so that the milk may collect in the udder (Lane, *Lexicon*, 1686).

1065. Juwāthā is a fortress in mainland Baḥrayn of the ʿAbd al-Qays, a town in al-Khaṭṭ, conquered by al-ʿAlā' b. al-Ḥaḍramī in the time of the Caliph Abū Bakr.

When the palm-frond drops off the palm and dates are very weak (ʿAwāmirī–Jārim).

1066. *Najdah* means drought, barrenness, dearth, and *risl*, plenty and abundance of herbage. *Risl* is basically fresh milk. The last hemistich means "They would defend me by violent or gentle means/with fighting or without fighting" (Lane, *Lexicon*, 1082).

1067. The *Aghānī* attributes the verse that follows to Ṣakhr b. ʿAbdullāh al-Khaythamī al-Hudhalī known as Ṣakhr al-Ghayy, notorious for his wantonness, violence and badness and so nicknamed al-Ghayy, the Evil. Quraym are of course a subtribe of Hudhayl.

1068. Or "in dearth or plenty".

1069. A Bedouin poet of the Umayyad period, possibly of the ʿAbbasid period also, little of whose verse is extant. He and his brother were bandits.

Camels they own, which not through blood-wits were obtained,
Nor (daughters') dowries, nor dishonourably gained.
But there protected them from scattered raiding bands
A cavalier who, mid spear-blades undeflected, stands.
Camels for all peace or war trained, obedient,
Known by their colours[1070] at times of blood-wit payment.

They described the qualities of *tharīd* in glowing terms. Al-Rā'ī said:

The night he spent star counting, in a bowl filled by
(Globules) of fat, on men's hands congealing swiftly.[1071]

Ḥassān b. Thābit[1072] said:

A *tharīd*, like the stars of the Pleiades, its ghee,
Or the eyes of a tom cat, on parts of it you see.

And Ibn Harmah said:

Till he brought to them a *shīzā*-wood bowl
Wherein a medley of the stars[1073] unroll.

Kāmil b. 'Ikrimah[1074] said:

Bread he offered among them, a bowl full, brimming,
Which he dressed with liquid fat to overflowing
Along with it came his two serving lads swaying,
Bent to the ground, the burden weighing down on them.
Their prime camels in it have become, I well know,
Captured in it, could knowledge classify them so.[1075]

213 This is on the describing of *tharīd*. Bishr b. Abī Khāzim[1076] said:

Their beards besmeared, you see, with the fat from the hump,
Melted marrow-colour, frost-matted to a lump.

The modern said:

1070. i.e. when the camels are paid over as blood-money their colours show, probably, their breed and to whom they belong.

1071. The sense appears to be either that the stars are reflected by the globules of fat or that they are themselves like stars floating on top of the contents of the bowl ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

1072. The Prophet's "poet laureate". This verse appears as an isolated line in his *Dīwān*. See W. 'Arafat in *EI*^{2}.

1073. The stars are again the globules of ghee.

1074. Only two other lines of this poet seem to be extant.

1075. The poet says that he is sure the camel meat is of the first quality though he has not actually seen the beasts that were slaughtered.

1076. An old man of Banū Asad who had taken part in the wars between Asad and Ṭayyi' in the times of the "Ignorance". His verse, apart from the erotic preludes, deals with these wars. By "frost" he means the fat of the hump.

Strong scent from dark green musk, a sheen gave to his hair parting
And perfume from oils, to his head, at the temples balding.
And when the black Yemeni (craftsmen) to weave undertake
His two striped Yemen cloths for him, them fine, ample, these they make.

Al-Zubayr b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib[1077] said:

For we were born (and), when we were born,
Striped Yemen clothes and powdered musk had we!
And but for the Ḥums[1078] men would not have worn
The clothes, till they die, of nobles (free).
Them (just) woollen mantles or cloaks adorn[1079]
Which hold the dirt, dirt like a skin of ghee.

And as you see, he distinguished between the clothing of nobles and people of affluence and others.

Al-Aʿshā said:

Surely al-Sharaf al-ʿAwd and its regions,
Lying between Ḥumrān and Yanṣūb,
Are better to them, if they fear a drought year,
Than its lord, Zayd b. Ayyūb,
Reclining, his doors knocked upon,
The slave running [hurrying] to him with the *kūb* (cup).[1080]

Abī 'l-Ṣalt b. Abī Rabīʿah[1081] said:

Drink! Health to you, reclined on cushions, wearing the turban,
On top of a palace of yours, much frequented, Ghumdān.

214 This does not come within the category of hyperbole. (Into) the category of

1077. The Prophet's uncle, to whom ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib bequeathed his position among Quraysh in Mecca. He was a poet but is remembered as the person who first invited the Meccans to form the Pact of the Fuḍūl which guaranteed security against aggression in the city.

1078. The Ḥums have been much discussed. The Ḥums movement among Quraysh was connected with the sanctuary at Mecca. The Ḥums introduced various taboos. These included a ban on circumambulating the Kaʿbah except in the garments of the Ḥums or naked. See Guillaume, *Life*, 87. Van Vloten reads *thiyāb-an ghurrat-an*, "splendid clothing", for "the clothes of nobles". The comment immediately following would support al-Ḥājirī's reading.

1079. The distinction is between fine Yemen cloth of silk or cotton and the coarser woollen clothing of ordinary folk. The noble house of ʿAbd Manāf wore the former. See Appendix 61.

1080. *Kūb*, bowl or cup (pl. *akwāb*). For a proposed interpretation of these verses see Appendix 60.

1081. The father of Umayyah b. Abī 'l-Ṣalt (p. 199, note 962). Ghumdān is the palace of Ṣanʿa' of pre-Islamic times which has become almost legendary but of which detailed descriptions are in the literature. The verse was composed on Sayf Dhī Yazan who delivered the Yemen from the Abyssinians, only for it to be taken over by the Persians. For Ghumdan and its site etc. See *Ṣanʿa'*, op. cit., 609.

hyperbole come for example the verses of Jirān al-'Awd[1082] in which he describes himself and his beloved, saying:

Where at morn we met there came—so did it hap—
A bracelet, an anklet, a gown, a silken wrap,[1083]
(Beads) from necklaces (girls) leave, lost when the cords snap,
Like red *ghaḍā*-wood[1084] coals, when rushing brings mishap.

Of this (genre) too is what 'Adiyy b. Zayd[1085] says:

O Lubaynā, kindle the fire:
He whom you love is bewildered.
At how many a fire have I spent the night a-gazing
While it consumed Indian wood and fragrant *ghār*[1086] wood,
And near it, kindling it, was a gazelle, a collar clasped round her neck.

A modern said:

For Ẓabyah,[1087] impassioned, fire I see set alight,
Made flare, after they're gone, vividly blazing, bright,
With *yalanjūj* wood ablaze, soon after midnight,
Sweet artemisia at times, fuel to ignite.

I have spoken of food to be commended—of what it is, and I have spoken of one of the two sorts of objectionable food.[1088] The other, *khazīrah*-broth[1089] of gravy and flour for which Mujāshi' b. Dārim[1090] was adversely criticized, and such as *sakhīnah*,[1091] for which Quraysh were criticized. Khidāsh b. Zuhayr[1092] said:

1082. 'Āmir b. Ḥārith b. Kulfah/Kalfah of Numayr from Najd, a pre-Islamic poet. He had two wives who were disobedient to him and left him. He threatened them with (a whip of leather from) the throat of an old camel (*jirān al-'awd*) in a verse and received his nickname from it (Ibn al-Rāshiq, *al-'Umdah*, 48).

1083. A *miṛ* is a dress of wool or floss-silk, a *miṭraf* a rectangular shoulder-cloth (*ridā'*) or wrap, "having ornamented or coloured or figured borders" (Lane, *Lexicon*, 2709–10).

1084. A variety of euphorbia. The red coals remind the poet of carnelian, once much worn by women in Arabia.

1085. A Christian poet of the latter part of the 6th century, a townsman (*qarawī*). He was secretary for Arab affairs at the Sasanid court at Ctesiphon/al-Madā'in. His enemies succeeded in having him put to death in prison in about 600. The translation is from the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, I, 47.

1086. The bay tree or female laurel tree, *Lauris nobilis*.

1087. Ẓabyah means a female gazelle, probably used here as a proper name. *Yalanjūj*, aloe wood; *rand*, artemesia.

1088. See p. 199.

1089. *Khazīrah* is a dish like *'aṣīdah* (savoury dough, Appendix 29) but with meat which has remained for a night, cut into small pieces. It is then cooked in plenty of water and some flour is sprinkled on it, or a soup made of gravy and flour, etc. (Lane, *Lexicon*, 732). Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ, Tahajjud*, 36, "I detained him (the Prophet) to eat a *khazīr* already prepared for him."

1090. A tribe of the northern Arabs of Tamīm.

1091. Flour thinner than *'aṣīdah*, thicker than gruel (*ḥasā'*), eaten only in dearth and leanness in cattle, or flour thrown on milk or water, eaten with dates. Quraysh were taunted with eating it.

1092. Khidāsh b. Zuhayr b. Rabī'ah of 'Āmir b. Ṣa'ṣa'ah, a cavalier of the "Ignorance" who used to lampoon Quraysh, who are said to have slain his father in the Fijār War between Quraysh and Kinānah towards the end of the 6th century.

O what a mighty attack we would have made—and no feint,
On *Sakhīnah*,[1093] but for night and the Ḥaram, with no restraint.

And ʿAbdullāh b. Hammām[1094] said:

In such case you would have smitten them till they would retreat.
215 At Mecca, therein to lick at the *sakhīnah* (they eat).

Jarīr said:

Khazīr-broth was set down and "Where is Mujāshiʿ?" 'twas said,
And a loutish oaf, gross eater, opened his beastlike lips.

Khazīr-broth was not a part of their diet—there is a Tradition about it. But *sakhīnah*[1095] was part of the diet of Quraysh and the Anṣār (Supporters), ʿAbd al-Qays,[1096] ʿUdhrah and any of those in proximity to palms were lampooned for eating dates. Al-Farazdaq said:

No Saʿdī am I, yellow showing on his teeth
Nor ʿAbdi, dates filling his saddle-bag (beneath).

Asad is lampooned for eating dogs and human flesh. The Arabs, when they come across a man of a tribe who has committed a disgraceful act, pin it on the entire tribe in the same way the tribe is commended for a fine deed, even if this be done by one of them only. So they lampoon Quraysh because of *sakhīnah* and ʿAbd al-Qays for dates. This is common (provender) among the two tribes in general, and both are among good foods and victuals, just as they lampoon (a tribe) for eating dogs and humans even if that be (the act of) a single man only. So if you want (to arrive at) a conclusion it may be you will find him absolved. The poet said:

O Faqʿasī[1097] why did you eat dog, Whyever?
Had Allah feared this of you, He'd forbad it there,
And its flesh and blood you would have eaten never.

On (this theme) Musāwir b. Hind[1098] said:

When a woman of Asad gives birth to a boy,
Of the lad's mean nature bear her tidings of joy.
Banū Dubayr women will make her birthday feast
Of whatever they come on, of what they count least.
On the mat of *thumām*-grass[1099] you will see the paws
Lying, tossed down there, of a crooked-tailed dog's paws.[1100]

1093. i.e. Quraysh. The Ḥaram being a sacred enclave, they could not attack it.
1094. A poet of the early Umayyad period, known for an elegy on the Caliph Muʿāwiyah.
1095. See note 1091.
1096. ʿAbd al-Qays were on the Baḥrayn mainland where there are many date-palms.
1097. Faqʿas b. Ṭarīf is a tribe of the Asad group, northern Arabs.
1098. A 6th-century poet of ʿAbs of Ghaṭafān.
1099. A common grass of pasture land. It is rather fine for a tray.
1100. These verses are repeated from p. 196.

216 He also said:

Banū Asad! If Faqʿas suffer from famine
The year and season for eating dogs falls therein.

Al-Farazdaq said:

When, one day, an Asadī's hungry, some place desolate,
And, be his dog plump, eating it he'll be (as sure as fate!).

Shurayḥ b. Aws said, lampooning Abu 'l-Muhawwish al-Asadī:

You called shame upon us for Iraq dates and wheat
But dog's penis on hot stones grilled is what *you* eat.

Asad, Hudhayl, al-ʿAnbar and Bāhilah are lampooned for eating human flesh. Of Hudhayl of poet said:

The fat of the haunch of Ibn Muḥaddam you did devour,
Blind rats of the desert! Let none feel safe from you one hour
They invited all (to dine) on him, four, five (women)[1101] beside.
The fingernails in him already fixed, flayed was his hide.
And his penis to your chief aloft in triumph you bore
Muʿāwiyah Split-Lip, a superb gift, could it be more?

Ḥassān (b. Thābit) said of them:

If treachery pure and unalloyed doth please you,
Go to al-Rajīʿ,[1102] ask of a house of Liḥyān,
A tribe that conspireth the neighbour[1103] to devour
Among them. (For them) the same are sheep, dog and man.

A poet lampooned Bal-ʿAnbar, meaning Thawb b. Shaḥmah,[1104] and thereby hangs a tale:

You were in haste, no remedy,
Kids or ewes, could divert you—ay!
Till you ate a girl,[1105] ivory.

217 When Thawb b. Shaḥmah was censured because of (the ʿAnbarī) lad's having eaten

1101. ʿAwāmirī–Jārim suggest that the numeral refers to women.

1102. The allusion is to a mission the Prophet sent to the tribes ʿAdal and al-Qārah to instruct them in Islam, but they betrayed the mission at al-Rajīʿ of Hudhayl and the latter killed them. For the incident see Guillaume, op. cit. Liḥyān is the most important tribe of Hudhayl. In the *Dīwān* the last hemistich runs: "And the best man of them and the he-goat are likes."

1103. The neighbour (*jār*) is the person living with the tribe and under its protection. To molest him is shaming.

1104. A personage of the "Ignorance" contemporary with Ḥatim al-Ṭaʾī, noble chief, known as "Protector of the Birds", which in his territory were neither disturbed nor hunted.

1105. Lit. *ṭaflah*, a female infant.

the woman's flesh (he held his peace) until he came down himself from the mountain and said:

Girl cousin of mine, how well you know my measure,
Since, that no vile provender do my ribs conceal.
A man of might am I, feared are whose fits of ire,
In the (battle) clamour wielding my blade of steel.

He (the Bal-ʿAnbar poet) lampooned Thawb b. Shaḥmah as an eater of woman's flesh, but this Thawb was in their minds too noble in spirit to taste such vile food even though he should perish of hunger where they were. There are tales about him—he did indeed take Ḥātim al-Ṭāʾī prisoner and he remained with him for some time.

The poet said, lampooning Bāhilah,[1106] in the same vein:

Bāhilah ate Ghifāq. From his flesh reft
His bones, and backbone too, they sucked,[1107] and left
(Poor) Ghifāq's mother of her son bereft.

Asad, as a group, was lampooned with this (imputation) because of Ramlah, daughter of Fāʾid b. Ḥabīb b. Khālid b. Naḍlah[1108] when her husband and her brother, Abū Arib, ate her. They averred that this, on their part, came about only by way of anger and jealousy. Taxing them with it, Ibn Dārah[1109] said:

Of having quenched your thirst, the milk of your small skin drunk down,
Is it you boast? Of what can a Faqʿasī boast renown?
And Ramlah, who was wife to one company of you two,
Sister to another—whom into ill repute she threw?
Abū Arib! With your brothers what relation have you
Over the flesh of her corpulent rump how has each to do?[1110]

And he said:

After Ramlah of Fāʾid, women-folk may you have no more,
You Banū Faqʿas. (Women) to you come, watched safely o'er.
At even-tide she came a bride—by morning she was meat,
In pots and bowls brought[1111] to her husband, among you to eat!

1106. The Bāhilah are a large tribe of Qays b. ʿAylān, northern Arabs of al-Yamāmah.

1107. To extract the marrow.

1108. Fāʾid is said to have been a Kufan of the Islamic Age.

1109. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muṣāfiʿ b. Dārah of Ghaṭafān, a poet of Islamic times and great lampooner of Banū Asad, who eventually caught and killed him.

1110. This last verse is difficult. ʿAwāmirī–Jarim consider *ikhwan*, brothers, to be in fact the same as *khiwān*, a table, and to be understood as such. The sense would then be: "How was the relationship between you and your table with the meat of her corpulent rump." In any event *al-ʿujr* is to be preferred to the text's *ʿujr*.

1111. *Jalā ʾl-ʿarūs ʿalā baʿil-hā*, means "to display the bride to her husband". So Ramlah was displayed to her husband in the bowls containing her flesh!

218 Al-Barāʾ b. Ribʿī[1112] brother of Muḍarris b. Ribʿī, reproaching Ṣalt who was his brother, said:

O Ṣalt, the site of your tent is stinking, noisome
So load up, for the (tent)-pole unfirm has become.
And if Fāʾid, demanding blood-monies, you find
The fact of her hood being stolen, call to mind.
Now summon Abū Rijāl, for ugly was she,
Familiar of she-devil, Umm Ḥabīb, closely.[1113]

This Abū Rijāl was her uncle on the paternal side. On the same theme, Maʿrūf al-Dubayrī said:

If at night you are with a Faqʿasī a guest
Never taste food of his to which you are bidden.
For the meat is MAN. Do not touch it, let it rest.
Provender best is what avoids the forbidden.

Kalb and al-Qayn b. Jasr[1114] were censured for their shameful action in eating testicles. That was on account of women. It came about that one of them, when forced to eat his testicles because of trifling with a woman, behaved in the same way with those who had perpetrated this action on him. One of those who had perpetrated it said:

Send Banū Kalb with you and their brothers a dog[1115]
And, after me, do not venture against anyone.
These are the testes, so eat them up yourselves,
As with your testes, among Banū Asad you have done.

This genre is profuse and prolix. In what I have adduced there is a pointer to the classification of the (various) contingencies that I aim to make. If you desire to see this as a whole, refer to (my) Book of the Shuʿūbiyyah where it is investigated in extenso.

When he is desirous of hospitality but sees no fire, the desert Arab barks, the dog will answer him and he will follow the sound. In this connection the poet said:

1112. Al-Faqʿasī, an obscure poet of the Umayyad period. His brother Muḍarris seems to have been better known, verses of his being scattered over various literary works. All this verse is Bedouin poetry.

1113. These verses seem to refer to Ramlah, daughter of Fāʾid b. Ḥabīb, eaten by her husband and brother—or so said their enemies! Umm Ḥabīb is a sort of devil that assumes the form of a woman so as to have intercourse with a man. Hubāb is the name of a satan. The lampoon seems to include a slight on the name of Fāʾid's father. The reference to the hood is not clear but to take a woman's hood (or in the Yemen a *maswan*) shames the taker and restitution plus a fine would have to be made. Perhaps Abū Rijāl took it off her.

1114. Kalb b. Wabārah are probably meant. They and al-Qayn b. Jasr were both Qaḥṭānī tribes of the southern Arabs and fought one another at Qarāqir.

1115. Kalb—the "Dog" tribe.

Many's the man barking, dog-like, come from a distant land,
Night rest and food seeking of us, folk whose welcome's at hand.

219 The latter-day (poet) said:

Ḥadas[1116] howled, when the night was covering the earth with a blanket of rain.
To a wayfarer, barking like a dog, twixt al-Rumaythah and al-Ḥaḍr.

The verse of Ḥumayd al-Arqaṭ shows you that he barks, mounted on his riding camel, so that the dog may bark back at him:

Many a dog howls when night covers Earth with a blanket of rain
When the Follower[1117] of the Pleiades dips Earthwards, on the wane.

Of them is the man who sends out his dog to reply and of them is the man who restrains his dog from doing so. Ziyād al-Aʿjam[1118] said, lampooning the Banū ʿIjl:[1119]

The dog of the tribe you muzzle, for fear you must provide.
Your cook-pot's like a virgin whom a curtain's raised to hide.

Another (poet) said:

We dismounted by ʿAmmār. He called to his dogs to set
Them at us. Between his two tents and us they all but ate.
I said to my companions as my secret I disclosed:
"Was that or Resurrection Day longer, had you supposed?"

Another poet said:

A savage dog I held ready for those coming as guest
With a club of *arzan*-wood[1120] added to it (for the rest).

Aʿshā of Banū Taghlib[1121] said:

When Muʿāwiyah b. ʿAmr camp
By wells, they strangle the dogs there.

Ibn al-Aʿrābī quoted to me, averring they were some of al-Majnūn's verse:

220

1116. Ḥadas, the name of a dog.

1117. Al-Najm is al-Thurayyā, the Pleiades. The Follower will be the *raqīb* of al-Thurayyā, the star that sets with the rising of another star, the *raqīb* of al-Thurayyā being al-Iklīl, the twenty-seventh Mansion of the Moon. See Paul Kunitzsch and Manfred Ullman, *Die Plejaden in den Vergleichan der arabischen Dichtung*, Munich, 1992, for the Pleiades. See Appendix 62.

1118. Ziyād b. Salmā/Sulaym Abū Umāmah, known as al-Aʿjam, the Persian, a client of the ʿAbd al-Qays, so nicknamed because of his Persian accent. He was present at the Arab conquest of Iṣṭakhr, a lampoonist and panegyrist: he died about 100/718, it seems in Khurāsān.

1119. Probably Banū ʿIjl b. Lujaym of Bakr b. Wāʾil, northern Arabs, ranging from al-Yamāmah to Basrah.

1120. A tree with hard wood of which clubs are made.

1121. One of several poets with the name Aʿshā, of the early Umayyad period. His poetry is concerned with the wars between Qays and his (Christian) tribe of Taghlib.

Many is the fire I've raised for poor fare (to invite),
In the hope the herdsmen would come to me by night.
A lankily built fellow of them to me did come up,
Dragging his camel slow to rise, hoping to sup.
With me his supper was gravy, on it flour thrown (*khazīr*),
(Dry) dates of the *jathīthah*[1122] palm, still with their stone.

Conversely to this, Ḥassān b. Thābit said:

The children of Jafnah,[1123] around their father's grave,
Grave of Ibn Māriyah, generous, noble, (brave).
They are come to, such numbers, their dogs do not growl.
About the crowd arriving they ask not (nor scowl).

Of his dog, al-Marrār al-Ḥammānī said:

Accustomed he is to folk, not barking at them,
Be it slave requesting a favour, or free man.

'Imrān b. 'Iṣām[1124] said:

'Abd al-'Azīz does overwhelming favours do,
Conferring them on his tribe and on others too.
Of all their courts, your court[1125] is the most lenient,
Thronged is your palace, a place the people frequent,
Friendlier your dog to those come bounties seeking,
Than a mother to her daughter come visiting.
Your hand, as soon as beggars come within your sight
Is, by far, more generous[1126] than a rainy night.

There is a great deal of verse (on the theme of) dogs' friendship for man because of seeing them so long. The poet said:

O Umm 'Amr do what you've promised. Be not remiss.
With faithfulness abide by promises to this.
221 By night I came to meet your folk's dogs at daylight.
So I left sleeping the bitches of them that bite.

1122. A *jathīthah* is a palm growing from a date-stone, reckoned in Ḥaḍramawt of poor quality. Palms are grown from spathes taken from the tree.

1123. Māriyah Dhāt al-Qurṭayn, of the Two Ear-rings, is the ancestress (*umm*) of the Banū Jafnah b. 'Amr b. Muzayqiyā', daughter of the king of Rūm (Byzantium), but there are several varying genealogies given her. Jafnah is the name of the eponymous leader of Ghassān in Syria (Caskel, I, Table 176).

1124. A poet and orator (*khaṭīb*). He was sent in 87/706 by the governor of Iraq, al-Ḥajjāj, to the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al-Malik to persuade the latter to appoint his son al-Walīd to succeed him instead of 'Abd al-Malik's brother 'Abd al-'Azīz. The latter however pre-deceased the Caliph. The following verses are evidently a panegyric on the Caliph's brother.

1125. Court, lit. *bāb* gate. Perhaps it means "most accessible".

1126. *Andā*, moister, and so, "more generous".

(They rose) from joy at seeing me, with tails wagging,
With (their) cheeks (upon) their forelegs cushioning.

Dhu 'l-Rummah[1127] said:

The tribe's dogs watched me until they were used to me
And over my camel-saddle the spiders' webs spread.

Another (poet) said:

The dogs sniffing at him, al-Ḥuwayrith spent the whole night
They[1128] travelled with him, like the crescent moon from hunger, white.

This verse comes within the same category. Another said:

On the day I visited you, wine did I bear,
I'm a friend of the house, the dog was well aware.
But, with the scent of musk diffused from me, I came,
And fragrant pink[1129] ambergris I warm by the flame.
Seeing me, the dog my scent did not recognize,
Though to the smell of wine-skin and tar he was wise.

Hilāl b. Khath'am said:

From visiting the lady my neighbour, chastely I refrain,
But that she speak ill of me in my absence brings me pain.
When her lord is away from her, to her (tent) I am far
From a frequent visitor, her dogs with me unfamiliar.
Nothing do I know of the tittle-tattle of her tent,
Nor yet am I acquainted with the weave of her garment.

Of the joy of a dog at the (arrival of) a guest, because of the custom to cut the throat (of an animal to feed him), Ibn Harmah said:

Much joyful clamour from the dogs of the tribe (the guest to greet)!
Milk follows—the herdsman hastes to fetch it—slabs of hump meat.

222 Ibn Harmah said:

Many's the traveller, barking like a dog, at whose cry
I alerted my (own) dog with: "Up yon hill and reply!"
On a man he came, faint of voice, by hunger sore tortured,
(Its) blow as with a keen sword, double-edged, having endured[1130]

1127. Abu 'l-Ḥārith Ghaylān b. 'Uqbah b. Nuḥays (*ca.* 77/696–117/735), a celebrated poet, a "stallion" (*faḥl*) a Bedouin poet composing in the style of the "Ignorance". Living in the time of the rivalry of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq, he supported the latter.

1128. i.e. the camels.

1129. *'Anbar*, ambergris. Despite its name a specimen shown me consisted of black, grey and *pinkish* lumps.

1130. This verse is difficult and there are variant readings. "Faint of voice" is the reading of *al-Ḥayawān* but *Khafiyy al-shakhṣ* of the text, "a concealed black object one sees from afar" is an equally good sense. The "blow with a keen sword" seems to be the blow dealt him by hunger, but it might be interpreted as "his having suffered the blow of".

And when I saw him I rejoiced to welcome him and greet
Him with the wherewithal every oft-comer I treat.

On the theme of the dog with regard to (its) barking, Ibn A'yā[1131] says of al-Ḥuṭay'ah:

Yea, may Allah disfigure al-Ḥuṭay'ah for the pains
He takes to shit upon every guest he entertains.
Strangling his dog he was, when (unawares) on him I came.
Yea then, may you have no father, all dogs bark just the same.
You wept for the foul milk-and-water mixture you retail
(To your guest). Yea! Any 'Absī, food dispensed will bewail.

They have said (verses) in description of the gates of people of power and wealth when they were discharging the obligations of persons of affluence. The *rajaz*-jingle poet said:

Liberality lies where you see the crowd.

Another (poet) said:

The people crowd about his gate.
An accessible water place
Is densely packed (early and late).

Another poet said:

When poor you become you see your gate deserted,
But, visitors by riches to you diverted.

223 This is not of (the same theme) as the first but is close to (the poet's) words:

Saw you not that those who dwell in a poor house are deserted
While the rich house is visited and to it directed?

This resembles (the poet's) words:

If scant be your money, solitary you'll be
What sort of folk will go the destitute to see?

The Arabs consider a man who makes gains and an inexperienced man actively trying to make acquisitions, excels, whereas they fault a solid, lackadaisical, sluggish and indolent man. For this reason the poet said in praise of a man:

Far-flung his ventures, far-reaching his aims and bold,
Tireless-traversing wadis, his bed constant cold.

Another (poet) said, in praise of himself:

1131. Ṣakhr b. A'yā al-Asadī is said to have uttered these verses as a riposte to verses of al-Ḥuṭay'ah after he had given him a drink of milk. Ḥuṭay'ah was an 'Absī. *Al-Ḥayawān* attributes the verse to A'shā of Banū Taghlib.

If you two come to me in wintertime and the place feel
Where lies my bed, that it is cold o'night that will reveal.

Another said:

To a king, distance his resolve not undoing,
His bed abandoned, laid out, intent on going.

Another said:

Your ransom[1132]—little caring, his eyes with sleep fill,
Seeing the place where your bed is laid down is chill.

Another said:

White, smiling, bitter cold his bed,
By one mouthful, whiles, he's sated.

224 They commend those who make fires (to attract wayfarers) and find fault with those who extinguish them (so as not to attract them). The poet said:

A fire is his by any (chance) breeze stirred to blaze
When the hill is enveloped in the darkling haze.
In pasturing beasts though not richest in the land,
Yet of them all, he is the openest of hand.

Muzarrid b. Ḍirār[1133] said:

He saw my fire, a tawny red, kindled, blaze bright
For eyes to see, set high on a commanding height.

He made it tawny red so as to lend a greater brightness of glow to it. Moreover a fire, if its wood be dry, has a fierier blaze but when it produces a lot of smoke its brightness diminishes. The latter-day (poet) said:

Many the fire that, (red) like an old camel's lungs,[1134]
As night comes on, the chill wind-gusts fan to a glow.

The higher the place where the fire is, the more bounteous and splendid is the man responsible for it, because of the many who see it from far away. Just think of al-Nābighah al-Jaʿdi[1135] when he says:

1132. Out of context the verse is uncertain. It might be understood as "May your ransom be . . .".

1133. Yazīd b. Ḍirār of Ghaṭafān, a poet of the "Ignorance", a lampoonist "with an evil tongue". He lived into Islam and is accounted a Companion of the Prophet. He was nicknamed Muzarrid. His younger brother was also a poet.

1134. The blood of the lungs would be brighter

1135. Ḥibbān b. Qays b. ʿAbdullāh of Banū Jaʿdah b. Kaʿb of ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿah, a poet born in the pre-Islamic period but lived and composed mostly in the Islamic age and is accounted a Companion of the Prophet. He is said to be one of those who in the "Ignorance" already disapproved of wine and drunkenness, abandoned idols and the arrows of divination associated with them. At Basrah he fell out with Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī during the latter's governorship, and he accompanied ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib to Ṣiffīn. He is specially known for "the war of epigrams" he waged with Laylā al-Akhyaliyyah, the famous poetess.

Fear of Allah prevents perfidy, but to me no such thought came.
For a perfidious man to think thereof is to commit the same.
(But a man am) I, like fire on a hill crest, resplendent of name.

Khansā' al-Sulamiyyah[1136] said:

Ṣakhr—the leaders model themselves upon him—as if he were a mountain with a beacon on its summit.

The sole thing that stops me from explaining all (the verses) preceding is the reliance I place on your acquaintance with it. This volume has a value only for one conversant with poetry and the speech[1137] (of Arabic), of the same way of thinking as folk, or (at least) who has acquired a good knowledge of it.

225 A pointer to the nobility of (tribes)-folk lies in their noble oaths and honourable avowals. Ma'dān b. Jawwās al-Kindī[1138] said:

If what you hear of me be so indeed, then may
My friend reproach me, nails from my hands torn away,
Mundhir's shroud, his shoulder-cloth I alone lay
And a foe of mine come on Ḥawṭ,[1139] intent to slay.

Also, on a similar theme, al-Ashtar Mālik b. al-Ḥārith[1140] said:

May I hold my wealth fast, recoiled from eminence,
With frowning face meet my guest (without deference),
If I do not in a raid on Ibn Ḥarb[1141] engage.
No day of it pass without people to pillage.
On horses very demons,[1142] spare and tough, to ride,
In combat charging with nobles, eyes stern in pride.
Hot is the armour they wear, (dazzling), as ablaze
With flashes of lightning from it, or else suns' rays.

1136. Al-Khansā', Tumāḍir, daughter of 'Amr b. Sharīd of Banū Sulaym, became the most celebrated poetess before Islam, to which she converted, accompanying a group of her tribe on a delegation to the Prophet. She took an oath not to change from her dress of mourning for her brothers, Mu'āwiyah and Ṣakhr, killed by Banū Murrah in a tribal raid against them. The verse cited here is from a poem translated in *CHAL*, i, 88. She is famous as their elegist.

1137. i.e., their traditions, speeches, dialogues etc. ('Awāmirī–Jārim).

1138. Of the Sakūn tribe in Kindah, Ḥaḍramis, a poet born before Islam who went to Kufah. A Christian, he became a Muslim in the days of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. These verses he is said to have been uttered to the Lakhmid al-Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir, absolving himself from the suspicion that he had warned Tamīm that al-Mundhir intended to raid them.

1139. Perhaps Mundhir and Ḥawṭ were his sons.

1140. Al-Ashtar al-Nakha'ī of the south Yemen tribe of Nakha' was a famous warrior-politician of early Islam. Opposed to the Caliph 'Uthmān, he is even cited as among his murderers. He came out in support of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and took part first in the Battle of the Camel and subsequently at Ṣiffīn, against Mu'awiyah. He opposed arbitrating between the two contestants and, probably on this account, 'Alī got rid of him by appointing him governor of Mosul, but he was poisoned before he could take up the office, in 37/657–8.

1141. i.e. Mu'āwiyah b. Ḥarb (Abū Sufyān).

1142. *Sa'ālī*, see note 176.

Ibn Sayḥān[1143] said:

'Anathema to me is harm should touch my brother's wife,
And reproach of my friend I should speak ever in my life.
But on support for Banū Muṭī'[1144] I have placed a ban,
As unguents on pilgrimage are forbidden to a man,
And also their silken cloths that they themselves did not buy
And places where they sit, which under thick shady branches lie.
If Time to injustice deviates I shall surely grasp[1145]
A strong bond of the bonds of Banū Hishām I shall clasp.
Always their branch is covered with foliage freshly out
When the branches of the basely mean are dusty in drought.

1143. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Sayḥān b. Artāh. The Āl Sayḥān were allied of Ḥarb b. Umayyah, Abū Sufyān; so he counted as of the Banū Umayyah but he was specially linked with the Āl Sufyān and Āl 'Uthmān. He was particularly attached to al-Walīd, son of 'Uthmān, because they were boon companions who used to drink together.

1144. Ibn Sayḥān had been punished by Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, later to become caliph, with eighty lashes for drinking. After this he went to the Hijaz where he had been on intimate terms with two houses of Quraysh, Banū ('Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b.) Hishām and Banū Muṭī'. He went as usual to Banū Muṭī' in whom he met disapproval, so he went to Banū Hishām, who received him well and sympathized with him. So he composed this lampoon on them and panegyric of Banū Hishām.

1145. Lit. "I shall stretch out (my hand to)". Cf. the Qur'ānic verse: "And have recourse for protection to the pact (*ḥabl*) of Allah" (Qur'ān, iii, 102).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

So indiscriminately does this miser's name appear as al-Ḥarāmī or al-Ḥizāmī that it cannot be said which is correct but the more likely is the former, as of Banū Ḥarām, the name of a street in Basrah. He is ʿAbdullāh b. Kāsib of whom al-Jāḥiẓ says: "He was the most miserly individual Allah ever created and the best (hearted) Allah ever created." In al-Ḥarāmī he found a splendid character to depict miserliness and the way misers think. He was a friend of the wanton poet Abū Nuwās, composed poetry after his manner and acteḍ in his way. Al-Jāḥiẓ devotes a chapter to him (The Story of al-Ḥizāmī/Ḥarāmī, p. 52 seq.).

Al-Kindī does not seem to be the famous philosopher al-Kindī. He was, as will be seen in the chapter al-Jāḥiẓ devotes to him (The Tale of al-Kindī, p. 70), an owner of house property, a miser, a wit and good conversationalist, an inhabitant of Basrah. Ismāʿīl b. Ghazwān used to consort with the philosopher-theologians (*mutakallimūn*) of his day but not a great deal is known about him.

Of al-Ḥārithī also little seems to be known but again al-Jāḥiẓ devotes a chapter to him (The Tale of al-Ḥārithī, p. 59). For Sahl b. Hārūn see p. 7.

Appendix 2

Iṣlāḥ, translated as "thrift, sound management", is central to the al-Jāḥiẓ's discussion of misers. It might be suspected that in southern Iraq the special application of the term was Aramaic usage and in Aramaic *aṣlaḥa* means "to make prosperous, to make succeed". However, al-Thaʿālibī, *al-Tamthīl wa-'l-muḥāḍarah*, Cairo 1381/1961, 428, has a section, *iṣlāḥ al-māl wa-'l-iqtiṣād fī-hi*, "the management of money/property and taking care of it", (Lane, *Lexicon*, 1714). Maxims al-Thaʿālibī quotes are: "He who manages his property (properly) preserves the two noblest things, religion and honour (*ʿirḍ*): a man taking the just mean does not become poor; manage your property (in anticipation of) a glancing blow of fate and the injustice of the authority (*sulṭān*); *iṣlāḥ* is one of the (two) earners; no poverty befalls a *muṣlīḥ*, a bad manager has no money: generosity does not lie in squandering: there is no miserliness (*bukhl*) with economy (*iqtiṣād*): . . . in good management of your property lies your beauty of face, the continuance of your power (*ʿizz*), the preservation of your honour (*ʿirḍ*) and soundness of your religion". In the present-day Ṣanʿā' the term *muṣliḥ*, lit. the person who arranges a settlement between two parties at variance, is applied to the dealer who acts as dealer between the

country folk and the retailer; one wonders if this function entered also into *iṣlāḥ* as practised at Basrah. Some of the maxims quoted by al-Tha'ālibī are to be found in *The Book of Misers*—the probability is that they are older than either author. See pp. 79, 92, 93.

Appendix 3

For this Tradition see al-Laythī's recension of Mālik's *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, Beirut, 1390/1971, 593, the case of a man confessing to fornication. The Prophet says: "Let whoever desires any of these foulnesses (fornication, etc.) cover himself with the covering of Allah, for whoever discloses to us his flank will have retribution inflicted on him by the Book of Allah." That is he will have the *ḥadd* punishment.

Appendix 4

Khabbāb, Jahjāh and Ṣaḥṣaḥ are the exponents of the strange philosophies, one might say, with a certain "wrong-headedness" outlined by al-Jāḥiẓ in this chapter, and on which he would have expanded in *The Book of Problems* (note 13). Khabbāb, according to al-Jāḥiẓ professed Mazdakian views and sought to promote his views on sexual conduct. What is known of Mazdak is easily consultable in E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, Cambridge, 1908 and reprints, 166–72 passim. "All evils, in Mazdak's view were to be attributed to the demons of Envy, Wrath, and Greed, who had destroyed the equality of mankind decreed and desired by God, which equality it was his aim to restore." In *al-Ḥayawān* are further remarks on Khabbāb's views about women, but he appears otherwise unknown—at least under this name.

Appendix 5

There is some obscurity about the person of al-Jahjāh. Al-Ḥājirī quotes one source which states that he was mad and accused of being a *zindīq*, a "heretic whose teaching becomes a danger to the state; this crime is liable to capital punishment . . . and to damnation" *EI*[1]. "Al-Rashīd (the Caliph) said to him: 'I shall certainly beat you with whips until you confess to *zindīq*-ism.' " Mocking at pretensions he made to the caliphate it was said to him: " 'This Amir of the Ḍarrāṭīn (Breakers of Wind) maintains that he is the Amir of the Faithful (the Caliph)'. To which he replied: . . . 'Breaking wind is general but Faith is special.' "

Another name that might be identified with al-Jahjāh is a certain Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd, an exponent of scholastic theology nicknamed by al-Jāḥiẓ al-Nūshirwānī in *al-Bukhalā'*, who is mentioned in a number of places in *al-Ḥayawān*.

Appendix 6

Abū Nu'aym 'Āmir b. 'Abdullāh b. 'Abd Qays, a Tamīmī of Banū 'Anbar, a Basran, one of the ascetics and a man of eloquence, often mentioned by al-Jāḥiẓ. He

received (Tradition) from Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (later to be one of the arbiters between 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and Mu'āwiyah). He became a censurer of conduct and criticized the Caliph 'Uthmān, who had him arrested and sent to him. 'Uthmān, however, was impressed by his asceticism and personality, and treated him generously and sent him back to Basrah. But there he fell out with its governor, who sent him to Syria where he criticized as he had done in Iraq, the frivolity (*lahw*) and departure from the verities of religion that he saw there.

Appendix 7

Abū Isḥāq Muzabbid was imbued with the jesting libertinism current at the time in a certain circle in Medina. He moved to Iraq in the time of the Caliph al-Mahdī whose court jester used to retail the amusing anecdotes of Muzabbad to him. This commerce in humorous anecdotes was not his only ploy, for at Medina he used to cater for other pleasures. He used to make *nabīdh* and sell it and arrange for men to meet women in his house, as appears to have been general among the pleasure-seekers in Medina at that time and those called *mukhannathūn*, bi-sexuals. His anecdotes have been collected by some authors.

Appendix 8

Yazīd b. Abān was born of a family of orators whose ancestors had been orators of the Sasanian monarchs. When they were taken captive and children were born to them in the Islamic countries and Arabian Peninsula this talent came out in the Arabic language and they produced verse and orations. But as the family intermarried with strangers the talent disappeared. Yazīd b. Abān is also noted as a *qāṣṣ*, a story-teller (see note 29) as well as an outstanding Muslim preacher. Al-Ḥājirī suggests the story-telling is part of the Persian heritage of the family. The scholars of Tradition, however, had suspicions of him, probably because his interpretation of the Qur'ān abounded in various stories which often did not conform to their strict canons. One of the Traditionists is reputed to have said: "I should prefer to fornicate sooner than relate Tradition on the authority of Yazīh al-Raqāshī."

Appendix 9

Pellat, (*EI*^{2}) describes the *qāṣṣ* as a "popular story-teller or preacher, deliverer of sermons whose activity considerably varied over the centuries, from preaching in the mosque with a form of Ḳur'ānic exegesis to downright charlatanism". There was a distinction between the private *qāṣṣ* and the official one instituted by the Caliph Mu'āwiyah to explain the Qur'ān after the address (*khuṭbah*) on Fridays. "After having been a popular exegete of the Ḳur'ān and a 'sermoniser', the *ḳāṣṣ* became a sort of buffoon who mainly replaced edifying narrations by comical and often improper stories" (loc. cit.).

Appendix 10

Abū Nuwās, al-Ḥasan b. Hānī' al-Ḥakamī, the most famous Arabic poet of the 'Abbasid period, was born at al-Ahwāz between 130/747 and 145/762 and died in Baghdad between 198/813 and 200/815. His father was a client of the Yemeni tribe of Ḥakam b. Sa'd al-'Ashīrah and his mother a Persian—he was therefore opposed to the northern Arabs of 'Adnān. He came to Basrah, then to Kufah and acquired a knowledge of the Qur'ān and Tradition, studying also under the grammarians of the time. Moving to Baghdad, he was received by the Barmecides but, after their fall, had to flee to Egypt. He returned to Baghdad and became the boon companion of the Caliph al-Amīn who, however, prohibited him from wine-drinking and even imprisoned him for it. He is regarded as the representative of the "modern" school of poets. His hunting poems are also of notable as forming a special genre though allied to classical models. Much of his verse is on homosexual themes and for this he is well known in the Arab world outside purely literary circles.

Appendix 11

Ḥusayn b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk of Basrah was a client of the Bāhilah tribe (*ob.* after 255/869). By his own avowal he was punished with beating by the Caliphs from al-Rashīd to al-Amīn for his penchant for their sons or relatives. He was an influence upon Abū Nuwās, though not a major poet himself. Most of his verse is erotic or Bacchic. He was on friendly terms with the Caliph al-Amīn, his elegies on whom incurred him the hostility of the Caliph al-Ma'mūn, so that he left Baghdad for Basrah, but was later recalled by the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim (Pellat, *Le Milieu basrien*, 163–4).

Appendix 12

Sahl b. Hārūn b. Rāhibūn was of Persian descent and came originally from Dastī-Maysān a few days north of Basrah. He came first to Basrah but became in touch with the Caliph al-Ma'mūn who put him in charge of the celebrated Bayt/Khizānah al-Ḥikmah, the House/Treasury of Wisdom at which he assembled a group of scientists and which was provided with a well-stocked library. He is described as a man of literature (*adīb*), a secretary and a poet. He was a strong partisan of the Shu'ūbiyyah, of the non-Arabs against the Arabs. He was well known for avarice (*bukhl*) and there are many stories about him in this connection. He wrote a treatise in praise of miserliness, presumably the treatise ascribed by Jāḥiẓ to him here, and sent it to his cousins of the Rāhibūn family and a copy to the Caliph's vizier, al-Ḥasan b. Sahl who minuted on it: "You have praised what Allah has censured and approved what he has stigmatized as unseemly and the rightness of your expression does not sustain the wrongness of your thesis. So we have made the recompense of your labours listening to what you have to say but

we shall not give you anything!" Sahl died in 215/830. Perhaps his attack on the virtue of liberality so highly considered by the Arabs is part of his anti-Arab attitude.

Appendix 13

Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥasan b. Abi 'l-Ḥasan Yasār al-Baṣrī (21/642–110/728). His father, originally named Pērōz was captured at the taking of Maysān in Iraq and bought to Medina where he married a woman called Khayrah. A year after the Ṣiffīn confrontation he went to Basrah and took part in the campaigns in eastern Persia in 43/663 onwards. "His fame rests on the sincerity and uprightness of his religious personality, and above all on his famous sermons and pronouncements" (Ritter, *EI*[2]). Of these only fragments survive but he is widely quoted by the anthologists. He constantly warned against worldly attitudes and attachment to earthly possessions. The *ahl al-sunnah* and the Muʿtazilites considered him as one of themselves.

Appendix 14

Ṭalḥah b. ʿUbaydillāh al-Taymī of Quraysh, known as Ibn al-Ḥaḍramiyyah, an early Islamic convert, also nicknamed Ṭalḥah al-Fayyāḍ (the Overflowing), a wealthy notable of Mecca. He defended the Prophet at Uḥud. He is described as haughty and full of self-esteem. He was appointed by the Caliph ʿUmar to the committee to elect a successor to himself, but happened to be absent. At first he assented to the caliphate of ʿUthmān but eventually came out, instigating people against him. He later came out against ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and was slain at the Battle of the Camel.

Appendix 15

ʿUwaymir b. Mālik b. Qays b. Umayyah, of the Supporters (al-Anṣār), a Khazrajī of the Bal-Ḥārith, a merchant before Islam, but after the Prophet came he abandoned trade for worship. He became qadi of Damascus under Muʿāwiyah while the latter was its governor under the Caliph ʿUmar. The luxuriousness he saw in Syria turned him to sermonizing and he is considered one of the founders of this type of religious activity in the Islamic provinces. He expressed dismay at the effect of the Arab conquests on distracting people from religion and was saddened at the conquest of Cyprus in his time. One of his dicta was: "Beware of sitting in the these suqs for they bring neglect and distraction."

Appendix 16

Thumāmah b. Ashras was a leader of the Muʿtazilites whose origins are obscure but he grew up in Basrah and studied there. He was persecuted in the days of

the Caliph al-Rashīd but in the days of al-Ma'mūn he was able to direct the religious policy of the state and give it a Mu'tazilite complexion, and his was the first word in the Caliphial palace. He would rise to his feet for Abu 'l-Hudhayl and hold his stirrup until he dismounted because, he said, "Abu 'l-Hudhayl has been my professor for thirty years." He had connections with the Barmecides, notably Ja'far b. Yaḥyā (note 879) with whom he was associated in the academy, the Dār al-Ḥikmah, the House of Wisdom (Appendix 12), and with the later vizier al-Faḍl b. Sahl also. Al-Ma'mūn thought highly of him and wanted him to be his vizier but he declined. He seems to have belonged to al-Ma'mūn's entourage at Merv. He had a lasting effect on Islamic intellectual life. At Baghdad he was able to represent the Basran school of scholasticism alongside the Kufan school. But the Traditionists were his bitter enemies.

Appendix 17

Muways b. 'Imrān was a Mu'tazilite and associate of Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām (see Appendix 21), learned in scholastic theology (*kalām*) and pronouncement of legal opinions (*fatwā*), but he differed from the Mu'tazilites on certain issues, e.g., on the "intermediate position between the two positions" (see note 394). He also held certain Murji'ite tenets. He was evidently a man living in comfortable circumstances, open-handed and in no way contentious. He visited the poet Abū Nuwās when the latter was imprisoned, to greet him and attend to some of his needs. He seems to have had a long association with al-Jāḥiẓ who refers frequently to him in *al-Ḥayawān*, remarking of him: "Falsehood and he did not take the same path."

Appendix 18

Khāqān b. Ṣubayḥ was a friend of al-Jāḥiẓ, who says of him that he was truthful and did not require a witness to confirm what he reported. He seems to have been concerned with questions of speculative philosophy. His name appears twice in lists of misers.

Appendix 19

Ṭāhir, of Persian descent, was the chosen general of Hārūn al-Rashīd's son, al-Ma'mūn, to attack his brother al-Amīn in Baghdad which he took quarter by quarter, using catapults and Greek fire. Al-Amīn was murdered by a party of Persian soldiers, but Baghdad rose against Ṭāhir, whom the caliph sent to Syria. Later, al-Ma'mūn appointed him governor of Baghdad, but becoming suspicious of his loyalty, Ma'mūn, now caliph, sent him to Khurāsān. He had him poisoned some years later. Ṭāhir was known as Dhu 'l-Yamīnayn, "He of the Two Right Hands", being ambidextrous and he slew the unpopular 'Alī b. 'Īsā, a former

governor of Hārūn al-Rashīd, wielding his sword with his left hand. Ṭāhir was a generous patron of learning and poetry and his letter to his son on the latter's being appointed to Iraq is regarded as a model of writing, of culture and of precept.

Appendix 20

A Baghdad Cookery Book, trans. by A.J. Arberry, 14, gives the recipe for *sikbāj* as follows: "Cut fat meat into middling pieces, place in the saucepan, and cover with water, fresh coriander, cinnamon bark, and salt to taste. When boiling, remove the cream and froth with a ladle, and throw away. Remove the fresh coriander, and add dry coriander. Take white onions, Syrian leeks, and carrots if in season, or else egg-plant. Skin, splitting the egg-plant thoroughly, and half-stew in water in a separate saucepan: then strain, and leave in the saucepan on top of the meat. Add seasonings, and salt to taste. When almost cooked, take wine-vinegar and date-juice, or honey if preferred—date-juice is the more suitable—and mix together so that the mixture is midway between sharp and sweet, then pour into the saucepan, and boil for an hour. When ready to take off the fire, remove a little of the broth, bray into it saffron as required, and pour back into the saucepan. Then take sweet almonds, peel, split, and place on top of the pan, together with a few raisins, currants, and dried figs. Cover for an hour, to settle over the heat of the fire. Wipe the sides with a clean rag, and sprinkle rose-water on top. When settled remove." There is also a recipe (p. 39) for *sikbāj tannūrī*, stew made in the *tannūr*, which latter I take to be what I have described in note 106. The *sikbāj* is left in the *tannūr* from nightfall till morning.

Appendix 21

Al-Naẓẓām was a Basran, a Mu'tazilite who founded a distinctive school in Basrah. He fought against the Dahriyyah who believed in the perpetuity of the cosmos (but see *EI*^{2} for a survey of their beliefs). In Baghdad he fought against the Murjiyyah, the Jabriyyah (Pre-destinationists) the Traditionists and *faqīhs*. He was also a poet, Qur'ān exegete and concerned with practical questions of law.

Appendix 22

Ṭabāhajah: "Slice the meat from the bone and chop up small. Cut and slice the tail, and put into the saucepan with a little water, half a dirham of ground salt and a *dānaq* of saffron; let the tail dissolve and remove the sediment. Now throw the meat into the saucepan on top of the oil, adding pieces of onion, sprigs of mint and celery, and stir until the juices are dry. Then add dry coriander, cummin, caraway, cinnamon and ginger, all ground fine, keeping back half of the seasonings to put in after the meat is cooked. Then take wine-vinegar, grape-juice and lemon-juice, mix, and add a little of all the seasonings: if desired a little sumach-

juice may also be added. Pour in these juices from time to time, until the cooking is complete. Take out the vegetables: sprinkle with old *murrī*, [see Appendix 28], or if this be not available, then with sumach-juice. Now add the remainder of the seasonings, together with a little pepper. Garnish with yoke of eggs, and spray with rose-water. Wire the sides of the saucepan with a clean rag, leave over the fire to settle, and remove." (Arberry, *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 17).

Appendix 23

Ibrāhīm al-Sindī b. Shāhak was a client and supporter of the 'Abbasids, especially Hārūn al-Rashīd, who entrusted him in particular with the execution of his decisions on the Barmecides. He seems to have been a subordinate to the chief of police at Baghdad under al-Rashīd and al-Amīn, to whom he was a trusted adviser. He is known because his friend al-Jāḥiẓ mentions him, describing him as "an incomparable man, an eloquent orator, a genealogist, *faqīh*, grammarian and prosodist, traditionist, transmitter of poetry and a poet . . . an astrologer and physician" (Pellat, *EI*^{2}).

Appendix 24

Al-Riyāshī was a contemporary of al-Jāḥiẓ, whose poetry reflects to some extent the various social tendencies of his time, at one moment shameless and at the next ascetic in tone. He appears also to have been affected by the learning of the Basrah scholars, to have found solace in books and have been himself thirsty for knowledge which he sought to acquire out of interest, not in order to achieve distinction or make money. He was also a wit and lampoonist. See Pellat, *Milieu*, 170–71.

Appendix 25

The *sajjādah* is the cicatrice on the brow which results from frequent contact of the brow with the ground in prostration at the prayer. Al-Ma'mūn accused "the person known as Sajjādah" of rubbing his brow with date-stones to produce the cicatrice. The practice was to bind garlic on it before going to sleep. It was a sort of ostentation on the part of the hypocritically devout, still not unknown today.

Appendix 26

Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, i, 171) reproduces, with minor variants, the biographical details of Khālid b. Yazīd Khālawayh al-Mukkadī from *al-Bukhalā'*, considering al-Jāḥiẓ's reportage as factual. Al-Ḥājirī, however, suggests that Yāqūt merely incorporated a piece derived from an extract of Khālawayh's speech circulated as a separate piece by booksellers. He can offer no proofs but while the passage impresses as assembled and arranged by al-Jāḥiẓ from reports of the utterances

of Khālawayh, there is no reason to question the information it provides. Khālawayh's claim to be a sort of super-crook with authority over much of the underworld is not beyond the bounds of possibility. The Indian element in the underworld is unmistakable—Khālawayh claims in his youth to have been a gypsy, *kājār* (*gājār*?) which al-Ḥājirī considers equivalent to *ghajar*, gypsies. Khālawayh claims to have fought in Sindān (see note 193), Mūltān in north India, and even in Ceylon. "The Head" may perhaps come from Indian sources and so may Khālawayh's knowledge of how to make spirits enter bodies. There is a strong Persian element among the various groups of rogues and Arab element in the superstitions on p. 40. It is curious that the stranglers with drums (*al-Ḥayawān*, vi, 390), similar to the Indian thugs, do not figure here.

Appendix 27

Al-Makkī is frequently mentioned by al-Jāḥiẓ in several of his books from which details of this person have to be culled. He grew up in Mecca and seems to have been a reciter of verse, a bard. Later he left for Iraq and took up residence in Basrah and came in touch with, among others, the Mu'tazilites like al-Naẓẓām and al-Jāḥiẓ. He was made governor of a place in Kaskar. He was evidently a wit with a fund of amusing tales.

Appendix 28

A Baghdad Cookery Book, 16. See also David Waines, "*Murrī*: the tale of a condiment", *Al-Qanṭara*, 1991, xii, ii, 371–88, quoting a recipe: "Take one part *būdaj* flour, finely sieved, and nine parts of sieved decomposed bread, mix them together and then place in a container adding water to cover the contents." *Nigella sativa* and fennel, with some oil, are added and the mixture is left overnight. Salt is added and the whole is rubbed with water to the consistency of pomade and left in the container for a week. *Būdaj* is Persian *būdanj*, pennyroyal.

Appendix 29

The recipe for *'aṣīdah* given by *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 53, is more elaborate than those of which I have partaken. "Toast three *raṭls* of white flour and remove. Then set the dish over the fire with three *ūqīya* of sesame-oil and a quarter of an *ūqīya* of whole cummin. When boiling and fragrant, pour in about two *raṭls* of water, and boil for an hour. Now add an *ūqīya* of washed rice: when boiling and the rice is cooked, sprinkle in the flour, stirring all the time with a poker. When the flour is finished, pour in about an *ūqīya* of sesame-oil, little by little. When set and thoroughly cooked and fragrant, remove from the fire. Grease the vessels with sesame-oil, and ladle out, covering with boiled sesame-oil, fine-ground walnuts and pistachios, and sesame, peeled and roasted. Then add syrup or honey, and

serve. If desired, instead of sesame-oil butter may be used as a dressing." For "peppered rice" (*aruzz mufalfal*), *ibid.*, 24.

Appendix 30

Dādhī is said to be the name of an Indian earth mixed with honey wine. It is, however, really a lichen (*Lecanora esculenta* Ev.), edible lichen which contains a lot of starch. Idrīsī says that the best quality is imported from Khurāsān. A strange export from the island of Socotra is *shanā/shinā*, which seems to be a sort of lichen collected by scraping it off the rocks after rain. There are two types, black and white, known in Socotri as *s'anghir* and *dihanah*. My recollection is that it goes to Aden where it is used as a flavouring. It is sold by the *jūniyah* (sack) (RBS). *Dādhī* is described by Maimonides, *Glossaire de matière médicale. Tāj al-'arūs*, ix, 114, says "*Dādhī* is the drink (*sharāb*) of profligates and it is wine (*khamr*)."

Appendix 31

He is Khālid b. 'Abdullāh b. Yazīd b. Asad al-Bajalī al-Qasrī, a lord of the Umayyad period, a noble and generous man, governor of Iraq from 106/724–5 to 120/738. Yūsuf b. 'Umar al-Thaqafī succeeded by intrigues in replacing him, imprisoned, tortured him and kept him in prison till he killed him at al-Ḥīrah in 126/743–4. Al-Jāḥiẓ has followed Abū 'Ubaydah in the latter's contrary view that he was mean over food. During his governorship he was exposed to many political and tribal storms and to the tongues of poets and calumniators—in this the protagonists of the Shu'ūbiyyah, anti-Arabs, and their supporters found material to assist their assault on the lords and nobles of al-Qasrī's time. Abū 'Ubaydah (see note 253), himself a client of the Quraysh tribe of Taym, a Khārijite and strongly opposed to the Arab nobles, asserts that he was a client of 'Abd al-Qays, the tribe of Hajar and of Jewish descent. Al-Ḥājarī quotes other attacks on his descent and character, among which he was said to have kept company with singers, etc.

Appendix 32

A Baghdad Cookery Book, 48, has several recipes for *khabīṣ*. "Take a *raṭl* of sesame-oil, add half a *raṭl* of water, half a *dirham* of saffron, and a quarter of a *raṭl* of white bread-flour: mix with an *ūqīya* of rose-water and a *raṭl* of honey all together, and boil, stirring with a poker until the oil resolved. If desired, add a handful of poppy and five *dirhams* of peeled pistachios. Serve out, covering under and over with fine-ground sugar." It can be made with almonds or pumpkin or carrots in much the same way. Abū Hubal al-Baghdādī, *Mukhtārāt*, i, 246–7, claims certain medical uses for *khabīṣ*, adding a variety made with quince. *Khabīṣ* of pumpkin, he says, has aphrodisiac properties.

Appendix 33

The *ṭafshīl(iyyah)* quite often figures in 'Abbasid literature, appearing even in a verse of Abū Nuwās: "Or you are a dish, you are a *ṭafshīliyyah*" (*Dīwān*, Wagner, ii, 103). *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 39, says: "*Ṭafshīl*—Cut fat meat into long pieces, put into the saucepan, cover with water, and boil, skimming. Take egg-plant, and remove the black skin. Cut up a little onion and large Nabatean leeks. If egg-plant is not in season, use carrot instead, scraped and cut into long pieces. Add fresh celery as required, and some sprigs of fresh mint. Add as much vinegar as there is water. Throw in mastic, coriander, cinnamon, pepper and ginger, all brayed fine with the exception of the cinnamon. Colour with saffron. Put in the oven, cover, and leave until dawn: then remove."

Appendix 34

Harīsah: "Take six *raṭls* of fat meat, and cut into long strips: throw into the saucepan, and cover with water. Heat until almost cooked: then take out, strip the meat from the bone, shred, and put back into the saucepan. Take good clean wheat, shell, clean, grind and wash: weight out four *raṭls*, and put into the pot. Keep a steady fire going until the first quarter of the night is gone, stirring all the time: then leave over a good fire. Put in quartered chicken with cinnamon-bark, and leave until midnight: then beat well until set in a smooth paste—set hard it is spoilt—adding salt to taste. If water is needed, put in hot water. Leave until dawn: then stir again, and remove. Melt fresh tail and pour this over when ladling out. Sprinkle with cummin and cinnamon ground fine separately. Serve with *murrī* and fresh lemon-juice. It is better when made in an oven than over an open fire" (ibid., 17). Coarse-ground rice may be used instead of wheat.

Appendix 35

The *ḥimā* was a grazing area declared inviolate to any but the tribal lord who declared it to be such, or his tribesmen. The killing of a she-camel that had strayed into the *ḥimā* of Kulayb b. Rabī'ah and was killed by him was the cause of the war of Basūs (see note 807). The South Arabian *maḥjar*, which survives to this day, is the same kind of institution.

Appendix 36

Abu 'l-Shamaqmaq grew up in Basrah in al-Bukhāriyyah, the street settled by Bukharans who had been moved there. It is evident that Abu 'l-Shamaqmaq was of Khurāsānī origin. He was an ugly man but cultured and witty, an inveterate beggar who stuck to his house clothed in rags. The small surviving remnants of his verse describe his poverty and his dissatisfaction with his fellow men which finds expression in his satirical poetry directed at amirs and poets. One of his humorous poems consoles his cat for the lack of mice in his house!

Appendix 37

Ḥays is fine dry bread or biscuit ground up with stoned fresh or preserved dates and ground almonds or pistachios. The mixture is kneaded with sesame-oil or butter and dusted with sugar.

Appendix 38

Bukhārī *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *diyāt*, 25–6, cites a Tradition on a foetus killed by a stone thrown at a pregnant woman's stomach. This incurs compensation of the *ghurrah* of a slave or slave-woman (*amah*). How this operated in Iraq this century is described by Fulanain, *Haji Rikkan: Marsh Arab*, 54 and 245–6: "In all cases where human life has been taken, the *faṣl* is paid in women, two, four, or six for each man's life, according to the custom of the tribe." For each man's life two or more women are handed over. Among tribes, obviously tribeswomen, not slaves, would be handed over. Fulanain call the woman a "*faṣl* woman", but the correct term is *ghurrah* (Jordan, *ghirrah*), the *faṣl* in class. In Jordan, the *Fātiḥah* (Qur'ān, *sūrah* i) is recited over the girl before handing her over. If she gives birth to a son she may return to her tribe or stay with her husband. It can hardly be doubted that the practice remounts to the pre-Islamic age. Of more recent times a money payment tended to be substituted for the girl, and the practice is now forbidden in Jordanian law.

Appendix 39

In Baghdad the *shabbūṭ* is eaten *masqūf*, i.e., it is split down the middle, cleaned, and the inner surface of the flattened fish is toasted over fire, but during the latter years it has become prohibitively expensive. Al-Jāḥiẓ describes it in *al-Ḥayawān* as a river fish and it is found in the Tigris and Euphrates. Lane (*Lexicon*, 1496) calls it a shad with a slender tail. Cf. al-Ḥanafī, *Ṣinā'āt Baghdād*, 147. It is used in a dish *māliḥ nā'im*, tender salty, *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 42.

Appendix 40

The 'Abbasid Caliph al-Manṣūr is stated to have been the first to make *khaysh*, translated as "bowers". He had a thick cloth wetted and put on an apparatus called *sibāyah* (Persian *sipāyah*), a tripod. *Khaysh* was a coarse heavy cloth also used for tents. It is sometimes called by the people who adopted it a *qubbah khaysh*, a dome of coarse cloth on a cane coop-like structure. Ice was put on it to cool it.

Appendix 41

In 550 the Sasanian Emperor Khusraw Anūshirwān founded at Jundī/Junday Shāpūr in Khuzistān a university for the pursuit of philosophical and medical studies, a centre of Graeco-Syrian culture which flourished into 'Abbasid times.

The transformation into an important medical centre, probably about this time, is held to have undoubtedly been the work of the Nestorian Christians. Presumably the dialect of the physicians was Aramaic, possibly Greek?

Appendix 42

In the Mediterranean basin an allergy to the broad bean has been found to be fairly common and perhaps this lies behind the curious beliefs about it. Al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Ḥayawān*, iii, 358 seq., names several ulema who did not eat the broad bean because it is "fetid, of corrupt humour, evil, making the blood curdle and thicken, causes black bile/melancholy and every tribulation". It also breeds flies. S.M. Stern, quoting 'Abd al-Jabbār (*Journal of Theological Studies*, 1968, xix, i, 154 and 156), states that among the Sabians of Ḥarrān, some did not eat beans, claiming that the bean was an enemy of the celestial sphere because the bean is elliptical in shape.

Appendix 43

The *'īnah* contract is one in which there is disguised interest, and is condemned by the jurists. A proverb runs: "Beware of *'īnah* contracts for they are accursed (*la'īnah*)." A, in this case, probably sells land at a stated price (*thaman ma'lūm*) and then buys it back. If A, the vendor, dies without an heir the purchaser would not be able to sell it back to him at a reduced price—which otherwise he would be obliged to do. This device (*ḥīlah*) to get round the prohibition of usury is of a type that has been common at all times in Islamic countries. See J. Schacht, *Ḥiyal* in *EI*^{2}.

Appendix 44

Khushknān (Persian, dry bread), *A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 51. *Khushknānaj*: "Take fine white flour, and with every *raṭl* mix three *ūqīya* of sesame-oil, kneading into a firm paste. Leave to rise. Then make into long loaves. Put into the middle of each loaf a suitable quantity of ground almonds and scented sugar mixed with rose-water, using half as much almonds as sugar. Then press together as usual, and bake in the oven: remove."

Appendix 45

This is the Urdu and Hindi *bhāt*, Prakrit *bhatta*, the original sense being simply "food", but for centuries the food *par excellence* was boiled rice. "*Muḥallabīya*, (also called *Bahaṭṭa*). Boil fat meat after cutting it into middling pieces and frying it lightly in dissolved oil as usual. When cooked, add more water, and leave on the boil for an hour, putting in as required salt, dry coriander, mastic and sticks of

cinnamon. When the meat is cooked, pour in lukewarm water to make a broth as required, by the used quantity of rice. When the water boils, throw in the rice, washed, as required, colour with saffron, and sweeten with syrup or sugar to taste. Leave over the fire an hour to settle: then remove." (*A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 26)

Appendix 46

"Most *mutakallims* [scholastic theologians] held, according to their theory of *jawhar* and *'araḍ*, that a body is composed of more than one indivisible substance (*jawhar fard*), each being composed of at least two or, according to others, six or eight, and certain accidents (*a'rāḍ*). Yet this *jawhar fard* differs from the atom of Democritus Lucretius. *Jawhar* has no shape or parts and cannot be free of *a'rāḍ* which cannot, in turn, exist except in the *jawhar* and have only a momentary existence. *Jawhar* being inseparable from its accidents, has only a momentary existence despite its being able to have continuous existence. The composition of every body or every part of the world depends therefore, on the continuous creative activity of God.

"This interpretation of the nature of bodies started among the Mu'tazilites and dominated, in general, *kalāmī* circles, counter to the philosophical interpretation of matter and form . . . Philosophers reject the idea of *jawhar fard*. The *kalāmī* conception is that all substances are the same in every kind of matter, and that differences only arise by the variety of accidents" (H.M. Abdel Latif, thesis on Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, London University, 1977).

Appendix 47

According to Aḥmad Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, *al-Qirā*, Cairo, 1948, 451; "The first who provided the pilgrims at Mecca with *fālūdhaj* was 'Abdullāh b. Jud'ān . . . He went on an embassy to Chosroes and ate *fālūdhaj* with him. He asked about it and they said: 'heart of wheat and honey.' " Modern Iraq calls it *bālūtah*, Egypt, *bālūzah*; Swahili, *fālūdah* derived from Persian *pālūdah* (lit. strained). *A Baghdad Cookery Book* recipe runs: "Take a *raṭl* of sugar and one-third of a *raṭl* of almonds and grind both together fine, then scent with camphor. Take one-third of a *raṭl* of sugar and dissolve in half an *ūqīya* of rosewater over a slow fire, then remove. When cooled throw in the ground sugar and almonds, and knead. If the mixture needs strengthening add more sugar and almonds. Make into middling pieces, melons, triangles etc. Then lay on a dish or plate and serve."

Appendix 48

"It is said of a merchant in Ispahan, where they are notoriously stingy, that he purchased a small piece of cheese at the new year, but could not make up his mind to the extravagance of eating it. So, instead of dividing the morsel with his

apprentice, as that youth had fondly hoped, he carefully placed it in a clear glass bottle, and, sealing it down, instructed the boy to rub his bread on the bottle and *fancy* the taste of the cheese. This the pair did each morning.

"One day the merchant, being invited to breakfast with a friend, gave the apprentice the key of his office and a halfpenny to buy a loaf of bread; but the apprentice returned, saying he could not get the door open, and though he had bought his bread, could not eat it without the *usual flavour* of cheese.

" 'Go, fool, and rub your bread on the door, which is *almost* as satisfying as the bottle' " (C.J. Wills, *The Land of the Lion and the Sun*, new ed. 1891, 172).

Appendix 49

This may be compared with the Turkish tale: "Nasreddin Hoca had sent home three pounds of veal cutlets, accompanied by a note in which he asked his wife to cook them in the way he liked for supper that evening. Since Hoca was to be away the entire day, his wife was faced with the prospect of lunching all alone, and she had therefore prepared for herself a simple meal. But some of her friends dropped in unexpectedly for lunch, and perforce the cutlets went into the preparation of a hasty dish. On returning home Nasreddin Hoca asked if the cutlets were ready and his wife, fearing his anger, resorted to a lie and told him the cat had eaten them. Nasreddin Hoca caught hold of the cat, placed it on the kitchen scale, and found that it weighed three pounds. 'If this is the cat', he said, 'where are the cutlets? And if what I hold here in my hands are the cutlets, then where is the cat?' " (*Nasreddin Hoca* [Naṣr al-Dīn Khwājah] selected and translated by Mübin Manyasig, Istanbul, n.d.). This story is also related of the butchers of the Ḥaḍramī city of Shibām, and its nickname "*Wazzinū-h*", "Weigh it" is in allusion to the command to weight the cat.

Appendix 50

He is Ḥuwayṭib b. 'Abd al-'Uzzā b. 'Abd Wudd, the two theophoric names of his father and grandfather respectively, indicating the family's involvement in the pagan religion before Islam. He is said, incredibly, to have lived a hundred and twenty years, sixty before and sixty after Islam (Ṭabarī, *History*, iii, 2326). In year 6 he was sent by Quraysh with Suhayl to treat with the Prophet at al-Ḥudaybiyah. Abū Sufyān, the head of Muḥammad's Quraysh opponents said to him (Ṭabarī, 2367): "Will you abase your honour (*taḍa'u sharafa-ka*) and leave the religion of your fathers for an invented religion (*dīn muḥdath*) and become a follower (*tābi'*)?" He was of the nobles (*ashrāf min ashrāf al-nās*) of the people whose "hearts were composed" by the Prophet's gift to each of them of one hundred camels. His career shows how unwillingly Quraysh gave in to the Prophet. In year 17 he was ordered "to renew the pillars (*anṣāb*) of the Ḥaram", marking its boundaries. Ṭabarī (2329) records the sale of his house in Mecca to the Caliph Mu'āwiyah for forty thousand

dinars and he did have five children, but al-Jāḥiẓ seems to have inflated the purchase price.

Appendix 51

Kaʿb (pl. *kiʿāb*) is rendered as "dice", but it is more likely that, in this first century of Islam, *kiʿāb* were the carpal bones and the end of the tarsus (Arabic *karsūʿ*) rather than marked cubes (*kiʿāb mawsūmah*). How it is played with these is well described by ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Dlayshī, *al-Alʿāb al-shaʿbiyyah fi 'l-Baṣrah*, Baghdad, 1965, 51 seq. and 78. See also Toufic Fahd, *La Divination arabe*, Leiden, 1966, 213. The game is to see in what position the *kaʿb*-bone lies when tossed on the ground. The game with two bones was being played in Syria in the 1950s and is reported a little earlier from al-Yamāmah. Traditionally the ulema have disapproved of this game.

Appendix 52

Ordinary folk, says al-Jāḥiẓ, reckon Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī the most generous of the Arabs, but what is told of Ḥātim does not measure up with what they recount of Kaʿb b. Māmah because Kaʿb gave himself until his generosity slew him. He did his utmost in generous spending, equalling Ḥātim in this respect but he outdid him by giving his life. The story runs that he went out with a party of riders, among whom was a man of al-Namir b. Qāsiṭ, in a blazing hot month, and lost the way and suffered from thirst. So they *taṣāfanū*, which means to put a pebble in a small drinking bowl that holds only enough for one man, giving as much to each man as would cover the pebble, and sharing it out in this way. Kaʿb noticed the Namirī staring fixedly at him and gave him preference over himself, saying to the man with the water, "Pour for your brother al-Namirī." That day the Namirī drank Kaʿb's share. Then they stopped at the last halt and shared the rest of the water out in the same way and the Namirī looked at Kaʿb as he had done yesterday and Kaʿb spoke as yesterday, and the tribesmen mounted and said: "Mount, Kaʿb", but he had not the strength to rise, and they were near water. "Come to the water, Kaʿb," they said, "you're coming to water". But he was unable to answer. Then he gave up the ghost.

Appendix 53

Ḥuṭay'ah of the ʿAbs clan of Qays (but his origins are uncertain) was born some forty years before the *hijrah*, but most of his extant verse is of the Islamic period. His nickname was probably due to his ugliness. Probably not a sincere convert to Islam, he apostatized after the Prophet's death but later rejoined the faith. He is reckoned one of "the four Arab misers" and avarice seems to have motivated his poetic activity. "His malice was so dreaded that men gave him gifts to safeguard themselves from it." He appears as an itinerant beggar poet, lavishing praise on

any liberal patron, threatening the less generous with vituperation. He attacked the Caliphs Abū Bakr and 'Umar and was imprisoned by the latter but was released on the intervention of Quraysh. He apparently survived to some time after 41/661 (Pellat, *EI*²).

Appendix 54

"*Al-Djafr* [*Jafr*] is the knowledge of the [auspicious and and inauspicious] days of the year, the knowledge of the direction of the winds, of the appearance and withdrawal of lunar mansions. . . The book called *al-Djafr* contains the predictions for the year, arranged according to the seasons and the lunar mansions: each group of seven lunar mansions, constituting a quarter of the year, is called *djafr*; they [the Persians] take omens from it for rains, winds, journeys, wars, etc." Pseudo-Jāḥiẓ, quoted in *EI*², ii, 376b. T. Fahd).

Appendix 55

Probably the same as *khabīṣ al-lawz*. "Take one *raṭl* of peeled ground sweet almonds, and three *raṭls* of sugar. Put the sugar into a dish and dissolve, with two *ūqīya* of rose-water. When the sugar is dissolved and has begun to set, add the ground almonds, and stir until done. Serve out, coating under and over with fine-ground sugar. This may also be made with flour: put with the *raṭl* of sugar two *ūqīya* of flour, then proceed as above (*A Baghdad Cookery Book*, 49)."

Appendix 56

A story is attached to this saying, which was first uttered by Mālik b. 'Amr al-'Āmirī. One of the kings of Ghassān sought blood revenge upon the Banū 'Āmir and took captive the sons of the Banū 'Amr al-'Āmirī, whom he kept for a while and then summoned them, saying: "I am going to kill one of you. Which of you is it to be?" Each replied: "Kill me in place of my brother." So he killed Simāk and let Mālik go. Simāk, when he knew he was to die said:

> And if they slay Mālik this I do swear,
> A snake watching out for them shall I be, there.
> . . . . . .
> So, Umm Mālik, be not grieved out of mind!
> What a mother bears is for death destined.

Some time after Mālik had returned to his people, Simāk's mother heard a passing band of riders singing "And if they slay Mālik I do swear", and she said to Mālik: "Allah has made life distasteful after Simāk (has gone). Go in quest (of revenge)!" He went forth and encountered his brother's slayer at the head of some of his tribe, and he said: "Who has noticed the red camel of mine?" But they said, having

recognized him: "Give up (seeking retaliation) and you shall have a hundred camels!" To which he replied: "I do not seek for a shadow after substance", and it became a proverb.

Appendix 57

A variant of this proverbial saying is: "*Anta tā'iq wa-anā mā'iq wa-kayfa nattafiq*?" "I am filled with anger and grief and my brother is quick to weep, so how can we agree?" It is so explained in the *Lisān al-'Arab*, and al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Ḥayawān*, i, 287, says the proverb was coined about the stupid companion of the road (*rafiq*) and his fellow traveller whom the length of the journey and the unpleasantness he has endured has made irritable. So at the first appearance of unpleasantness on the part of his companion he vents his irritation upon him. A *zamīl* is one riding behind another upon a camel. There are a number of explanations of the proverb, the passage seems difficult, perhaps even partly corrupt.

Appendix 58

Al-Tabliyā is what people nowadays in Iraq call *tibalyā*. It is used for climbing up palm trees and is made of strong rope. The tool, as well as its name, is still used in Iraq. It is a belt woven of ropes, the centre of which is broad, and which goes round the back of the climber: the other end goes round the tree, and both ends then are fastened together. Usually the part which goes round the tree is made of a bent piece of strong metal, fastened from both ends to the belt, so that it is easy to move it on the tree. The climber leans back on the fastened belt, pushing the trunk with his feet, and moving the metal piece with his hands, upwards or downwards on the tree. The *barband* will be a similar article. In Najd the *tibalyā* is used only for palm trees and is called there *karr*. *Tabliyā* seems to be an Aramaic word.

Appendix 59

Umayyah b. 'Abdullāh Abī 'l-Ṣalt b. Abī Rabī'ah was of the tribe of Thaqīf but his mother was a daughter of 'Abd al-Shams b. Manāf, an ancestor of the Umayyads. He was a poet of the pre-Islamic age, unique of his kind. He seems to have been acquainted with books and forbade the drinking of wine and had doubts about idols. Of a religious inclination, he travelled to the Yemen and Syria where he had the opportunity of meeting men of religion and reading their books. These travels he took in pursuit of trade. He is described by al-Jāḥiẓ as "the craftiest of Thaqīf, Thaqīf being of the crafty persons among the Arabs", and he is said to have wished to claim prophethood. He lived into Islam but far from becoming a Muslim he encouraged Quraysh after their defeat at Badr and elegized those of them slain there in a poem the Prophet forbade to be recited. Most of his poetry is no longer extant but fragments assembled from a number of sources have been published.

The poet seems to allude to the trading partnerships of Quraysh connected with the famous "summer and winter journey" (Qur'ān cvi, 1). The final hemistich corroborates that Quraysh associated the less well off with their trading enterprises, as noted by M.J. Kister, "Mecca and Tamīm", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* (1965), 125.

Appendix 60

Yāqūt attributes these verses to 'Adiyy b. Zayd al-'Abbādī whose son owned camels. 'Adiyy sent them to an interdicted pasture (*ḥimā*), but its lord (*abū*) became angry with him and sent them back. Horsemen came and took them, but 'Adiyy sallied forth and rescued them, uttering these verses. The first line is difficult to understand and might be corrupt. Of the opening words *al-'awd* means "a hump, an old camel", and "old". According to Yāqūt; "In al-Sharaf (of Najd) is al-Rabandhah and its right hand is an interdicted pasture (*ḥimā*)". This is of course a far cry from Syria where 'Adiyy was court poet. But, in the context, to take al-Sharaf al-'Awd as a place name would fit well (especially if it happened to be an interdicted pasture), but no location can be assigned to a place called al-Sharaf al-'Awd and Yāqūt offers no indication of the location of Ḥumrān and Yanṣūb either.

For *jaḥrah* of the second verse, Yāqūt reads *ḥujrah*, an enclosure for camels (from the same root as *maḥjar*, an interdicted pasture, also). So an alternative sense proposed for the line (in the translation based on al-Ḥājirī's text) runs:

Surely al-Sharaf al-'Awd and its regions
Lying between Ḥumrān and Yanṣūb
Is better for them (the camels)
If they fear an enclosure (= interdicted pasture)
Than its (the pasture's) lord, Zayd b. Ayyūb.

This harmonizes with the story, but it is of course conjectural.

Appendix 61

The *shamlah*, of wool or goat hair, is a mantle in which one wraps oneself, but the term may also be used of a small *kisā'* used as a waist-wrapper (*izār/mi'zar*: see note 1023)). *Abā'ah* is a woollen garment, a cloak or mantle, generally with stripes. A certain ambiguity arises over the use of these terms, owing to the fact that the basic dress in much of Arabia consists of three pieces of cloth, the waist-wrapper, the shoulder-cloth and the turban, for each of which a similar piece of cloth may be employed. The *ḥibrah* is a garment of the kind called burd of al-Yamān, spotted (*munammar*) or striped (*mukhaṭṭaṭ*), of cotton or linen, probably also of silk (Lane, *Lexicon*, 499). Yemeni cloth was a luxury item even before Islam.

Appendix 62

Regarding al-Arqaṭ's verse, Professor Kunitzsch points out that if it had read *tāli al-najm* it would have been clear to him that Aldebaran, alpha Tauri, well-known as the "Follower of the Pleiades" is intended, but Aldebaran is always masculine. It is suggested that, Aldebaran, being an asterism, al-Arqaṭ, departs from the conventional *tābiʿ/tāli al-najm* and follows another tradition in which al-Dabarān designates the five stars known to us, since antiquity, as "the Hyades" (cf. Lane, *Lexicon*, 844; P. Kunitzsch, *Arabische Stern-namen in Europa*, Wiesbaden, 1959, 109, n. 3). Here he may have taken the asterism as a collective group of stars, this being qualified by the feminine singular adjective according to the rules of grammar. The verse is in the *ṭawīl* metre and this requires the reading *tāliyatu 'l-najam*. See P. Kunitzsch and Manfred Ullman, *Die Plejaden in den Vergleichen der arabischen Dichtung*, Munich, 1992.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY BY WADĪ'AH NAJM

'Abd al-Shahīd, Samuel, *al-Rūḥ al-'ilmiyyah 'inda al-Jāḥiẓ fi Kitāb al-Bukhalā'*, Beirut, 1975.

Abū 'Alī, Muḥammad Barakāt Ḥamdī, *Sukhriyyāt al-Jāḥiẓ min Bukhalā'i-hi*, Amman, 1982.

Abū al-Naṣr, 'Umar, *Āthār al-Jāḥiẓ*, 1969.

'Afīfī, Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq, *Namūdhaj al-bakhīl fi al-adab al-'Arabī wa-al-Adab al-Franasī*, Beirut, 1971.

Arberry, A.J., 'New material on the *Kitāb al-Fihrist*', *Islamic Research Association Miscellany*, 1949, pp. 35–45.

al-Ashtar, 'Abd al-Karīm, *Fann al-qiṣṣah fi Kitāb al-Bukhalā'*, Damascus, 1963–4.

'Aṣī, Michelle, *Mafāhīm al-jamāliyyah wa-al-nagd fi adab al-Jāḥiẓ*, Beirut, 1974.

'Atawī, Fawzī, *al-Jāḥiẓ dā'irat ma'ārif aṣri-hi*, Beirut, 1971.

al-Azdī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *Ḥikāyat Abī al-Qāsim al-Baghdādī*, ed. Adam Mez, Heidelberg, 1902.

al-Baghdādī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan, *Kitāb al Ṭabīkh*, British Library MS 14546.

Balba', 'Abd al-Ḥakīm, *al-Nathr wa-athar al-Jāḥiẓ fi-hi*, Cairo, 1975.

al-Bayhaqī, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad, *al-Maḥāsin wa-al-masāwī*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo, n.d.

Blau, Joshua, 'Notes on syntactic phenomena in classical Arabic as exhibited by Jāḥiẓ's *Kitāb al-Bukhalā'*', *Israel Oriental Studies* 5, 1975.

Bosworth, C.E., *The Medieval Islamic Underworld: the Banū Sāsān in Arabic society and literature*, Leiden, 1976.

Chelebi, Dāwud 'Kalimāt Fārisiyyah musta'malah fī 'āmmiyyat al-Mawṣil, taṣḥīḥ aghlāṭ *al-Bukhalā'*', *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Arabī* 20, 1945.

Dagron, R., 'L-Histoire d'al-Kindī, extraite de *Kitāb al-Buḫalā'* d'al-Ǧaḥiẓ', *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 38, 1975.

Enderwitz, S., 'Gesellschaftlicher Rang und Ethnische Legitimation der Arabische Schriftsteller Abū 'Uṯmān al-Ǧāḥiẓ über die Afrikaner, Perser und Araber', *Der Islamischen Gesellschaft*, 1979.

Fākhūrī, Ḥanna, *al-Jāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1956.

Fashl, Aḥmad Aḥmad, *'Ārā' al-Jāḥiẓ al-balaghiyyah wa-tathīru-hu fi al-ballāghīn al-'Arab ḥattā al-qarn al-khāmis al-Hijrī*, Alexandria, 1979.

Figueroa, 'Dos Narraciones de la-Yahiz, prosista clasic del siglo IX', *Etudios Orientales* 23, 1973, pp. 276–85.

Gabrielli, F., 'On the *Risāla fi manāqib al-Turk*', *Scritti in onore di G. Furlani*, *al-Fikr*, Tunis, 1957.

—'On the *Risāla al-Qiyān*', *al-Fikr*, Tunis, 1958.
Geries, I., 'Quelques aspects de la poésie mu'tazilite d'al-Ǧāḥiẓ', *Studia Islamica* 51, 1980, pp. 67–88.
—*Un Genre littéraire arabe: al-Maḥāsin wa-al-Masāwi'*, Paris, 1977.
Ghurayyib, Jurjī, *al-Jāḥiẓ, dirāsah 'āmmah*, Beirut, 1967.
al-Ḥakīm, Rushdī, *'Kitāb al-Bukhalā'* li-l-Jāḥiẓ', *al-Mashriq*, 1961, pp. 619–28.
al-Ḥājirī, Ṭāhā, *al-Jāḥiẓ, ḥayātu-hu wa-āthāru-hu*, Cairo, 1962.
al-Ḥanbalī, Ibn Abī al-Makārim, *Kitāb al-Futuwwah*, ed. M. Jawad *et al.*, Baghdad, 1960.
Hirschfeld, H., *Essays by al-Jāḥiẓ*, London, 1922.
al-Ḥūfī, Aḥmad Muḥammad, *Al-Jāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1980.
Ibn 'Asākir, 'Biography of al-Jāḥiẓ' (in Arabic), *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Arabī* 9, 1929.
Ibn Ḥazm, 'Alī, *al-Fiṣal fi al-Ahwā' wa-al-Milal wa-al-Niḥal (al-Jāḥiẓiyyah)*, Cairo, 1317 A.H.
Ibn Mbairik, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Ṣūrat bakhīl al-Jāḥiẓ al-fanniyyah min khilal khaṣā'iṣ al-uslūb fi*, Kitāb al-Bukhalā', Baghdad, 1985.
Ibn al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Isḥāq, *al-Fihrist*, ed. Riḍā Tajaddud, Iran, 1971.
Ibn Qutaybah, 'Abdullāh b, Muslim, *Kitāb al-Ashribah*, al-Muqtabas, 1907.
al-Ibshīshī, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, *al-Mustaṭraf min kull fann mustaẓraf*, Cairo, 1379 A.H.
Iraq Folklore Centre, *al-Mawrūth al-sha'bi fi āthār al-Jāḥiẓ – mu'jam mufahras*, Baghdad, 1976.
Jabr, Jamīl, *al-Jāḥiẓ fi ḥayāti-hi wa-adabi-hi wa-fikri-hi*, Beirut, 1959.
—*Nawādir al-Jāḥiẓ*, Beirut, 1963.
Jabrī, Shafīq, *al-Jāḥiẓ, mu'allim al'aql wa-al-adab*, Cairo, 1948.
—'Ta'līq 'alā Kitāb al-Jāḥiẓ', *Majallat al-Majma'* 36, 1961, pp. 310–15.
Ja'far, Nūrī, *al-Jawānib al-sīkūlujiyyah fi adab al-Jāḥiẓ*, Baghdad, 1981.
al-Jāḥiẓ, 'Amr b. Baḥr, *Kitāb al-Āmil wa-al-ma'mūl*, ed. Ramaḍān Shishn, Beirut, 1983.
—*al-Bayān wa-al-tabyīn*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, Cairo, 1948.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, ed. Aḥmad al-'Awāmirī Bey, Cairo, 1939.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, ed. G. Van Vloten, Leiden, 1900.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, ed. Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī, Cairo, 1948.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī al-Zu'bī, Damascus, 1955.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, Beirut, 1960.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, Damascus, 1963.
—*al-Bukhalā'*, ed. 'Abbās 'Abd al-Sātir, Beirut, 1984.
—*Le Livre des avares de Ǧaḥiẓ*, tr. Ch. Pellat, Paris, 1951.
—*Libro de los Avaros*, tr. Serafin F. Garcia, Madrid, 1984.
—*Kitab al-Bukhalā'*, tr. Kh.K. Baranov, Moscow, 1985.
—*al-Burṣān wa-al-'urjān wa-al-'umyān wa-al-ḥūlān*, tr. Muḥammad Mursī al-Khawlī, Cairo, 1972.

—*al-Burṣān wa-al-ʿurjān wa-al-ʿumyān wa-al-ḥūlān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, Baghdad, 1982.
—*Risālat al-Qiyān*, *The Epistle on Singing Girls*, ed. tr. A.F.L. Beeston, Warminster, 1980.
—*al-Ǧāḥiẓ quatre essais*, tr. C. Vial, Textes et traductions d'auteurs de l'Orient, VIII/1, 1976, VIII/2, 1979, 2 vols.
—*Excerpte und Übersetzungen aus den Schriften des Philologen und Dogmaters Ǧāḥiẓ aus Basra*, tr. Oskar Rescher, Stuttgart, 1931.
—*al-Ḥayawān*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, Cairo, 1947.
—*Kitāb al-Tāj fī akhlāq al-mulūk*, *Le Livre de la couronne*, tr. Ch. Pellat, Paris, 1954.
—*al-Kitāb al-musammā bi-al-Maḥāsin wa-al-aḍdād*, *Le Livre des beautés et antithesis*, ed. G. Van Vloten, Amsterdam, 1974.
—*al-Maḥāsin wa-al-aḍdād*, Beirut, n.d.
—*Majmūʿ Rasāʾil al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, ed. al-Ḥājj Muḥammad al-Sāsī al-Maghribī, Beirut, 1972.
—*Majmūʿ Rasāʾil al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, ed. Ṭāhā al-Ḥājirī, Beirut, 1983.
—*Kitāb Mufākharāt al-jawārī wa-al-ghilmān*, ed. Ch. Pellat, Beirut, 1957.
—*al-Qawl fī al-bighāl*, ed. Ch. Pellat, Cairo, 1956.
—*Risālah fī al-amṣār wa-ʿajāʾib al-buldān*, ed. Ch. Pellat, *al-Mashriq*, 1966.
—*Risālah fī al-Aḥnaf b. Qays*, ed. Ch. Pellat, *al-Mashriq*, 1969.
—*Risālah fī al-ḥakamayn wa-taṣwīb Amīr al-Muʾminīn ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib*, ed. Ch. Pellat, *al-Mashriq*, 1958.
—*Risālah fī naf al-tashbīh*, ed. Ch. Pellat, *al-Mashriq* 1953.
—*Risālah fī tafḍīl al-baṭn ʿalā al-ẓahr*, ed. Ch. Pellat, *Ḥawliyyāt al-Ǧāmiʿah al-Tūnisiyyah* 13, 1976.
—*Rasaʾil al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, Cairo, 1964–79, 2 vols.
—*Rasaʾil al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, ed. Ḥsan al-Sandūbī, Cairo, 1933.
—*Risālah fī al-Nābiṭah*, ed. G. Van Vloten, *Actes du XIe Congres Internationale des Orientalistes*, 1899.
—*Kitāb al-Tabaṣṣur bi-al-tijarah*, ed. Ḥasan Ḥusnī ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, Cairo, 1935.
—*Kitāb al-Tabaṣṣur*, tr. Ch. Pellat, *Ǧāḥiziana II, Arabica*, 1945.
—*Kitāb al-Tarbīʿ wa-al-tadwīr*, ed. Ch. Pellat, Damascus, 1955.
—*Kitāb al-Tarbīʿ wa-al-tadwīr*, tr. M. Adad, Leiden, 1968.
—*Thalāth rasāʾil*, ed. J. Finkel, Cairo, 1926.
—*Two Essays by al-Ǧāḥiẓ, Kitāb al-Muʿallim, Kitāb fī al-radd alā al-Mušabbihah*, ed. I. Gereis, Tel Aviv, 1980.
—*al-ʿUthmāniyyah*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Muḥammad Hārūn, Cairo, 1955.
al-Kaylānī, Sāmī, *al-Nafs al-insāniyyah fī adab al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1961.
al-Khafājī, Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim, *Abū ʿUthmān al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, Cairo, n.d.
al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, *al-Bukhalāʾ*, ed. Aḥmad Maṭlūb *et al.*, Baghdad, 1964.
—*Tārīkh Baghdād*, XII, Cairo, 1931.

Kitābjī, Zakariyyā, *al-Turk fi mu'allafāt al-Jāḥiẓ*, Beirut, 1972.
Littmann, E., *Zigeuner - Arabisch Wortschatz und Grammatik der arabischen Bestandteile in den morgenländischen Zigeuner-Sprachen, nebst einer Einleitung über das arabische Rotwalschund die Namen der morgenländische Zigeuner*, 1920.
Malti Douglas, Fedwa, *Structure of avarice: the* Bukhalā' *in medieval Arabic literature*, Leiden, 1985.
Manṣūr, Sa'īd, *The World View of al-Jāḥiẓ in* Kitāb al-Ḥayawān, Alexandria, 1977.
Maralais, W., 'Quelques observations sur le texte du *Kitāb al-Bukhalā'* (*Le Livre des Avares*) d'el-Ǧāḥiẓ', *Mélanges Rene Basset*, Paris, 1925.
Mardam, Khalīl, *al-Jāḥiẓ*, Damascus, 1930.
Margoliouth, D.S., 'Wit and humour in Arabic authors', *Islamic Culture* 1, 1927.
Marshal, D.R., 'An Arab humorist – al-Jāḥiẓ and the *Book of Misers*', *Journal of the Faculty of Arts of Malta* 4, 1970.
al-Mubārak, Muḥammad, *Fann al-qiṣaṣ fi* Kitāb al-Bukhalā' *li-l-Jāḥiẓ*, Damascus, 1965.
Najm, Wadī'ah, 'Studies on the writings of al-Jāḥiẓ', unpublished PhD thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1958.
al-Najjār, Muḥammad Rajab, *Ḥikāyat al-shuṭṭār wa-al-'ayyārīn fi al-turāth al-'Arabī*, Kuwait, 1981.
Palacios, Asin, *El Libro de los animales de Jāḥiẓ*, 1930.
Pellat, Ch., *Arabische Geisteswelt Ausgewahlte und Überstezte Texte, unter Zugrundelgung der Arabischen Originaltexte*, tr. W. Müller, 1967.
—'Ǧāḥiẓ à Baghdad et à Sāmarrā', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 27, 1952, pp. 47–67.
—'al-Ǧāḥiẓ et les peuples du sous-Continent', *Orientalia Hispanica* 1, 1974, pp. 542–50.
—'Ǧāḥiẓiana II, le dernier chapitre des Avares de Ǧāḥiẓ', *Arabica* 2, 1955.
—'Ǧāḥiẓiana III, essai d'inventaire de l'oeuvre Ǧāḥiẓienne', *Arabica* 3, 1956.
—*The Life and Works of Jāḥiẓ*, tr. D.M. Hawke, Berkley, 1969.
—*Le Milieu Basrien et la formation de Ǧāḥiẓ*, Paris, 1953.
—*Pages choisies de Ǧāḥiẓ*, Paris, 1949.
—'Seriousness and humour in early Islam', *Islamic Studies* 2, 1963.
Rosenthal, Frantz, *Humor in early Islam*, Leiden, 1956.
Sa'd, Fārūqī, *Ma'a Bukhalā' al-Jāḥiẓ*, Beirut, 1978.
—*Ma'a al-Bukhalā'*, Beirut, 1971.
Sallūm, Dāwud, *al-Naqd al-manhajī 'inda al-Jāḥiẓ*, Baghdad, 1960.
al-Sāmarrā'ī, Ibrāhīm, *Min Mu'jam al-Jāḥiẓ*, Baghdad, 1982.
al-Sandūbī, Ḥasan, *Adab al-Jāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1931.
Selim, Shakir Mustafa, *Marsh dwellers of the Euphrates Delta*, 1961.
Shalabī, Khayrī, *al-Ṣuṭṭār*, Cairo, 1985.
Skarzynska-Bochenska, K., 'Les Ornements du style selon la conception d'al-Ǧāḥiẓ', *Rocznik Orientalistyezny* 36, Warsaw, 1973, pp. 5–46.
al-Tawḥīdī, Abū Ḥayyān, *Kitāb al-Imtā' wa-al-Mu'ānasah*, Cairo, 1944–53, 3 vols.
'Ubayd, Aḥmad 'Abd al-Ghaffār, *Adab al-fukāhah 'inda al-Jāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1982.

Uways, Muḥammad, *al-Mujtamaʿ al-ʿAbbāsī min khilāl kitābāt al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1977.

Van Ess, J., *Das Kitāb an-Nakt des Naẓẓām und seine Rezeption im Kitāb al-Futya des Ǧāḥiẓ. Eine Sammlung der Fragmente mit Übersetzung und Kommentar*, 1972.

Yāqūt b. 'Abdallāh, *Irshād al-arīb ilā maʿrifat al-adīb*, ed. D.S. Margoliouth, London, 1923–31.

al-Yasūʿī, Viktūr Shalḥat, *al-Nazʿah al-kalāmiyyah fī uslūb al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1964.

Zakī, Aḥmad Kamāl, *al-Ǧāḥiẓ*, Cairo, 1967.

—'al-Jāḥiẓ, muʿallim al-fukāhah', *al-Hilāl*, 1966.

Zalzalah, Muḥammad Ṣādiq, *Majmaʿ al-amthāl al-ʿāmmiyyah al-Baghdādiyyah wa-qiṣaṣu-hā*, Kuwait, 1976.

al-Ziriklī, Khayr al-Dīn, 'al-Jāḥiẓ', *al-Aʿlām*, Cairo, 1959.

Index

ʿAbd al-Aʿlā al-Qāṣṣ 91, 156
ʿAbd al-Jabbār 238
ʿAbd al-Mālik b. Qays al-Dhiʾbī 130
ʿAbd al-Mālik b. ʿUmayr 201
ʿAbd al-Muʾmin 7
ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib 135
ʿAbd al-Nūr 177–9
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakrah 132
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf 170, 191
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muṣāfiʿ b. Dārah 217
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Sayḥān b. Artāh 225
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ṭāriq 129
ʿAbdullāh b. Abī ʿUthmān 59
ʿAbdullāh al-ʿArūḍī 46, 90, 112
ʿAbdullāh b. Ḥabīb al-ʿAnbarī 96n, 211
ʿAbdullāh b. ʿHammām 215
ʿAbdullāh b. Judʿān 210
ʿAbdullāh b. al-Muqaffaʿ 103–4
ʿAbdullāh al-Rahayyam xxv
ʿAbdullāh b. ʿUmar 146
ʿAbdullāh b. Wahb al-Rāsibī 126
ʿAbdullāh b. al-Zubayr al-Asadī 206
Abī ʾl-Ṣalt b. Abī Rabīʿah 213
ʿAbīd b. al-Abraṣ 167
ʿAbīd b. Sharyah al-Jurhumī (Ibn Sharyah) 37–8
Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Thawrī 27, 35
  tale of 87–96
Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Marwazī 17–18
Abu ʾl-Aḥwaṣ al-Riyāḥī 36
Abu ʾl-ʿAlā Ashʿath b. Jubayr 129
Abū ʾl-ʿAnbas 125
Abu ʾl-ʿĀṣ b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb b. ʿAbd al-Majīd al-Thaqafī
  epistle of 133–46
  Ibn Tawʾamʾs retort to 146–71
Abu ʾl-Aṣbagh 107
Abu ʾl-Ashhab 131, 180
Abu ʾl-Aswad al-Duʾalī 13–14, 132, 165
Abu ʾl-ʿAtāhiyah 160
Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, Caliph 13, 170–1
Abu ʾl-Dardā 11, 14, 126, 155, 164, 206
Abū Dāwūd al-Iyādī 149n
Abū Dharr 93
Abu ʾl-Dharr 144
Abu ʾl-Fatḥ 45
Abu ʾl-Fātik 55–6
  comment on the discourse of 63–7
Abū Hammām al-Sanūṭ 187
Abu ʾl-Ḥārith Ghaylān b. ʿUqbah b. Nuḥays (Dhu ʾl-Rummah) 221
Abū ʾl-Ḥārith b. Jummayn/Jummayz 7, 59–60, 81, 156
Abu ʾl-Ḥasan al-Madāʾinī 48, 114–15
Abū Hubal al-Baghdādī 106n, 235
Abu ʾl-Hudhayl al-ʿAllāf 54, 117, 231
Abu ʾl-Iṣbagh b. Rabʿī Dhuʾayb 29
Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām xxv, 19–20, 24, 31, 44, 112, 172, 232
Abū Isḥāq al-Makkī 45, 52, 54, 96–7, 105, 112, 173–4, 234
Abū Isḥāq Muzabbid 7, 228
Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Yasīr al-Riyāshī 22–3, 159, 203n, 205, 207–8, 233
Abū Jaʿfar of Tarsus, tale of 48
Abū Kaʿb 109–10
Abū Kaʿb al-Ṣūfī 7
Abū Līnah al-Naṣr b. Abī Miryam 181
Abu ʾl-Manjūf al-Sadūsī 174

Abū Māzin 31–2
Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥizamī ʿAbdullāh b. Kāsib see al-Ḥizāmī Ḥarāmī
Abū ʾl-Muhawwish al-Asadī 216
Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī 228
Abū Nābaqah Muḥammad b. Hishām al-Sidrī 85
Abū Nuʿaym ʿĀmir b. ʿAbdullāh b. ʿAbd Qays al-ʿAnbarī 5, 7, 227–8
Abū Nuwās al-Ḥasan b. Hāniʾ al-Ḥakamī 7, 20, 61, 159, 208, 226, 229, 231, 236
Abū ʾl-Qamāqim b. Baḥr al-Saqqā 106–7
Abū Qutbah, tale of 97–8
Abū Rāfiʿ al-Kilābī 174
Abū ʾl-Rajāʾ al-ʿUtāridī 201
Abū Righāl 163
Abū Saʿīd al-Ḥasan b. Abī ʾl-Ḥasan Yasār al-Baṣrī 9, 11, 23, 62, 94, 146, 180–1, 230
Abū Saʿīd al-Madāʾinī 37
tale of 118–24
Abū Saʿīd Sajjādah 23–4, 233
Abū Salamah ʿUthman al-Shaḥḥām 201
Abū ʾl-Samḥāʾ Suḥaym b. ʿĀmir 204
Abū Sayyārah ʿUmaylah b. al-Aʿzal 181
Abū ʾl-Shamaqmaq 61, 108n, 236
Abū Shuʿayb al-Qallāl 60
Abū Sufyān 240
Abū Sulaymān the One-eyed 37
Abū ʿUbaydah 54, 169, 206, 235
Abū ʿUbaydullāh b. Salmān 181–2
Abū ʿUthman ʿAmr b. ʿUbayd b. Bāb 191
Abū ʿUthmān al-Aʿwar 174
Abū ʿUthmān al-Jāḥiẓ see al-Jāḥiẓ, Abū ʿUthmān
Abū ʿUyaynah, tale of 125–7
Abū Wāthilah Iyās b. Muʿāwiyah al-Muzanī 181
Abū Yaʿqūb al-Aʿwar 90
Abū Yaʿqūb al-Dhaqanān 104
Abū Yaʿqūb al-Khuraymī 112, 145–6, 159, 182
Abū Yaqẓān (Suḥaym b. Ḥafṣ) 66
Abū Zayd (Saʿīd b. Aws al-Anṣārī) 65, 118
accidents, distribution of goods against 12
Adam 91
al-Aḍbaṭ b. Quray 167
ʿAdiyāʾ 143
ʿAdiyy b. Zayd 214, 244
ʿafār wood 27
Aḥmad b. Hishām 23
Aḥmad b. Isḥāq al-Khārakī 108–9
Aḥmad b. Khalaf, tale of 32–5
Aḥmad al-Makkī 120–2
Aḥmad b. Muthannā 46
Aḥmad b. Rashīd 15
al-Aḥnaf b. Qays (al-Ḍaḥḥāk/Ṣakhr) 8, 10–11, 164
ʿĀʾishah 62, 144
al-Akhnas b. Shihāb 161–2
Aktham b. Ṣayfī 127, 164n, 185
Aldebaran 244–5
ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib 166, 170, 178n, 230
Alī Abu ʾl-Ḥasan 102
ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā 231–2
ʿAlī b. Khālid al-Aswārī 47, 50, 57–8
al-Amīn, Caliph 229, 231
ʿĀmir b. Ḥārith b. Kulfah/Kalfah Jirān al-ʿAwd 214
ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ 11, 83
ʿAmr al-Jāḥiẓ 190
ʿAmr b. Maʿdī Karib 61, 127
ʿAmr b. Nihyawī 14, 67
ʿAmr b. Qamīʾah b. Dhirrīḥ/Dharīḥ 192
al-ʿAnbarī, tale of 96–7
ʿAntarah 75
al-Aqraʿ b. Ḥābis 136n
Aristotle xxv
al-ʿArūḍī, ʿAbdullāh 46, 90, 112
Asad b. ʿAbdullāh al-Qasrī 127
Asad b. Jānī, tale of 86–7
al-Asadī 198
Aʿshā of Banū Taghlib 219
al-Aʿshā, Maymūn b. Qays 84–5, 93, 101n, 213
al-Ashtar Mālik b. al-Ḥārith 224
ʿaṣīdah savoury dough 52
recipe for 234
ʿĀsim b. Khalīfah al-Ḍabbī 194
Asmāʾ b. Khārijah 206
al-Aṣmaʿī 114, 129, 133, 179–86, 191–3, 201–3
tale of 124–5
Aswad b. Abī Karīmah 14, 159, 177
al-Aswad b. Yaʿfur 55
al-ʿAṭarraq 131–2
auguries 38
al-ʿAwāmirī Bey, Aḥmad xiii, xxv
ʿAwf b. al-Qaʿqā 63
Ayyūb b. Isḥāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Sāfirī 186
Ayyūb b. Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik 101
Azhar Abu ʾl-Niqam 41

Bābak 43
Baghdad xxv
bahaṭṭa, recipe for 238–9
Bakr b. ʿAbdullāh al-Muzani 7, 94, 146
al-Bakrī al-Awnabī 94n

Banū Hānīʾ 41
al-Barāʾ b. Ribʿī 218
Bashshār b. Burd 107n, 165n
basil 41
Basrah xxv
Basrah Folk, story of the Habitués of the Mosque of 24–9
al-Basūs of Banū Bakr 166
Bayt al-Ḥikmah (House of Wisdom) 229
beans 88, 238
beggars 36–44, 104, 115, 144, 152, 164–5
bhaṭṭa broth 109
  recipe for 238–9
biestings 106
Bilāl b. Abī Burdah 59, 130, 135, 156
Bilāl b. Rabāh 141
Bilāliyyah fighters 41
birth feasts 191
Bishr b. Abī Khāzim 212
Bishr b. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam 207
Bisṭām b. Qays al-Shaybānī 194
blood 141
  camelsʾ 195, 197
  uses for 28, 195–7
blood-money 67, 237
bowers (*khaysh*) 86, 237
buildings *see* property
burial 42
  alive 145
Byzantine Greeks 172

cannibalism 215–18
Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization vii, ix-xiii
cesspits 97
charity 23, 76, 144, 162–3
circumcisions 192
clothing and shoes, miserliness with 9–10, 23–4, 30–1, 49, 51, 88–90, 98, 108, 119–21
cooking pots 24, 203–9

dādhī 52, 235
al-Dajjāl (anti-Christ) 207
al-Dārdarīshī 115
date cake (*ḥays*) 63, 211
  recipe for 237
date racemes 27
date syrup 52–4
date wine (*nabīdh*) 41, 52–3, 84–5, 114
Dawsar al-Madīnī/Midyanī 156n, 157
Dāwūd b. Abī Dāwūd 48, 52, 54
Decimus (?Zosimus of Panopolis) 165–6
depilatory paste 35
Dhirāʿ al-Dharrā 131
Dhu 'l-Qarnayn 37
Dhu 'l-Rummah 221
Dhu 'l-Yamīnayn (Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn) 18, 231–2
divination 155, 242
divorce 20
al-Djafr divination 155, 242
djinns 38
doctors 86
dogs 139–40, 191n, 215–16, 218–22
drums 42
drunkenness 30, 32, 84–5, 100–2, 167
Duʿaymīṣ 38
dung, uses for 28

al-Faḍl b. ʿAbd al-Ṣamad al-Raqāshī 207–8
al-Faḍl b. ʿĪsā al-Raqāshī 159, 181
al-Faḍl b. Sahl 231
Faʾid b. Ḥabīb b. Khālid b. Naḍlah 217
falsehood 4
fālūdhaq sweets 113, 156, 210
  recipe for 239
famines 194–201
fānīdh 26
al-Farazdaq 136, 198, 204, 206, 215–16
farting 97–8, 101
al-Fayḍ b. Yazīd 188
feasts 138n, 190–3
Fīlawayh, tale of 98–9
Firʿawnī glass 39
fire
  danger of 69
  as sign of hospitality 223–4
flint and tinder 27
food 190–218
  cooking pots 24, 203–9
famines 194–201
feasts 138n, 190–3
  miserliness with 8–9, 13–16, 19–21, 26–30, 33–6, 44–7, 49, 51–67, 77–88, 91–7, 99–106, 108–19, 124–5, 127–32, 138, 155–9, 172–80, 189, 239–40
  money contrasted with 13
  objectionable 194–202, 214–18
  recipes for 232–9, 242
  styles of eating 56, 63–7
fornication 71–2
Fraternity of Young Men 55, 84

gardanāj roast 189
gate-crashers 65–6
Ghaḍbān al-Qabaʿtharī 158
al-Ghāḍiri 187
ghāliyah-scent 48
gharbi wine 41
Ghaylān b. Salamah 163
Ghāzī Abū Mujāhid 30
al-Ghazzāl 103
glass 39
  lamps 17–18
Great Books of Islamic Civilization Project vii
Greeks 172

Habitués of the Mosque of the Basrah Folk, story of 24–9
al-Ḥājirī, Ṭāhā xiii, xxv
al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf 129, 158
al-Ḥakam b. ʿAbd al-Asadī al-Ghādirī (Ibn ʿAbdal) 207
al-Ḥakam b. Ayyūb al-Thaqafī 131
ḥama plant 61
Ḥamdān b. Ṣabāḥ 108
Ḥamdawayh Abu 'l-Arṭāl 41
al-Ḥarāmī *see* al-Ḥizāmī/Ḥarāmī
Ḥarim b. Quṭbah al-Fazārī 93
Ḥārim b. Sinān b. Abī Ḥārithah 183n
harīsah paste 57, 107
  recipe for 236
al-Ḥārith b. Ḥillizah 143
al-Ḥārith b. Kaladah 94
al-Ḥārithī 1, 65–6, 226
  tale of 55–63
Harthamah b. Aʿyan 83
Harūn al-Rashīd 182n, 227
al-Ḥasan b. Abi 'l-Ḥasan Yasār al-Baṣrī, Abū Saʿīd 9, 11, 23, 62, 94, 146, 180–1, 230
al-Ḥasan b. Sahl 229–30
Hāshim 62, 136, 210
Ḥassān b.Thābit 141n, 143n, 212, 216, 220
Ḥātim b. Khalaf 33
Ḥātim al-Ṭāʾī 118n, 136–7, 217, 241
haughtiness 10
ḥays 63, 211
  recipe for 237
al-Haytham b. ʿAdiyy al-Ṭāʾī 202
al-Haytham b. Mut.ahhar (Faʾfaʾ) 7
Haytham the Weeper 5
Ḥibbān b. Qays b. ʿAbdullāh al-Nābighah al-Jaʿdi 192, 223–4
al-Hibshi xxv
Hilāl b. Khathʿam 221
ḥimā pasture 61n, 236
Hishām, Caliph 13
Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Mālik 130
al-Ḥizāmī/Ḥarāmī (Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥizamī ʿAbdullāh b. Kāsib) 1, 90, 112, 226
  story of 48–54
hospitality 218–24
  refusal of 31–4, 193–4
al-Ḥuḍayn b. al-Mundhir al-Raqāshī Abū Sāsān 13
Ḥumayd al-Arqaṭ 219
humours 3
Ḥusayn al-Khālī (Al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Yāsir) 7, 229
al-Ḥuṭayʾah, Jarwal b. Aws b. Malik 144, 158, 222, 241–2
Ḥuwayṭib b. ʿAbd al-ʿUzzā b. ʿAbd Wudd 130, 240–1
Hyades 245

Ibn ʿAbbās 162–3
Ibn ʿAbdal 207
Ibn Aḥmar 7
Ibn al-Aʿrābī 219
Ibn Ashkāb 187–8
Ibn al-Athīr 12n
Ibn Aʿya 222
Ibn Ghazwān 1, 35, 75–8, 90, 112, 133–4, 174, 226
Ibn Ḥabbār 209
Ibn Harmah (Ibrāhīm b. ʿAlī b. Harmah) 158–9, 163, 212, 221
Ibn Ḥassān 171–2
Ibn Jaḥwash 198–200
Ibn Judham al-Shabbī 103–4
Ibn Juhānah al-Thaqafiyyah 114
Ibn al-Kalbī 196n
Ibn Mājah 94n
Ibn Marzubān 139n
Ibn al-Muʿāfā 162
Ibn Mushārik 133
Ibn al-Nawwā (?Kathīr b. Ismāʿīl) 7
Ibn Qutaybah xxv, 58n, 129n, 202n
Ibn Quṭbah, tale of 97–8
Ibn Sāfirī 186
Ibn Sharyah 37–8
Ibn Sīrīn 12, 155
Ibn al-Tawʾam al-Raqāshī 133
  retort to epistle of Abu 'l-ʿĀṣ 146–71

Ibn al-ʿUqadī, tale of 110–12
Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz 172–3
Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbdullāh b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib 177
Ibrāhīm b. ʿAlī b. Harmah 158–9, 163, 212, 221
Ibrāhīm b. Hānīʾ 109
Ibrāhīm b. al-Khaṭṭab 66
Ibrāhīm b. Sayyābah 190
Ibrāhīm al-Sindī b. Shāhak 20–2, 233
ʿImrān b. Awfā 174
ʿImrān b. ʿIṣām 220
Imruʾu 'l-Qays 105
īnah contracts 88, 118, 238
incense and perfume 48–50, 107, 191
inheritance 23, 77, 116
intellectualism, rejection of 4
ʿĪsā b. Sulaymān b. ʿAlī 57–8, 173n
Isḥāq Slayer of the Freemen 37
Ismāʿīl b. Ghazwān (Ibn Ghazwān) 1, 35, 75–8, 90, 112, 133–4, 174, 226
Ismāʿīl b. Naybakht 61
Ismāʿīl b. al-Qāsim b. Suwayd b. Kaysān Abu 'l-ʿAtāhiyah 159

Jabal al-ʿAmmī al-Ghamr 31–2
Jābir b. ʿAmr al-Muzanī 165n
Jadd b.Qays b. Salimah 141
Jaʿfar b. Abī Zuhayr 61
Jaʿfar b. Saʿīd 90, 112
Jaʿfar son of Wāṣilʾs sister 125–6
Jaʿfar b. Yaḥyā al-Barmakī 182, 231
jafr divination 155, 242
al-Jāḥiẓ, Abū ʿUthmān ʿAmr bin Baḥr al-Fuqaymī al-Baḥrī xiii–xiv, xxv
al-Bayān wa 'l-Tabyīn xiii
al-Bukhalāʾ (The Misers) xiii–xv, xxv
al-Ḥayawān xiii, xxv, 243
al-Jahjāh 4, 36, 227
al-Jammāz, Muḥammad b. ʿAmr 61
al-Jārim Bey, ʿAlī xiii, xxv
Jarīr b. ʿAṭiyyah b. Ḥudhayfah al-Kalbī al-Yarbuʿī 158, 210
Jarīr b. Bayhas 131
al-Jārūd b. Abī Sabrah 59, 156
Jarwal b. Aws b. Malik al-Ḥuṭayʾah 144, 158, 222, 241–2
Jassās b. Qutayb 165n
jawhar and *ʿarad*, concepts of 111, 239
al-Jawharī 127–8
al-Jazīrah, butchers of 40
jealousy 4
jesting 6
jinns 38
judhabah bread 109
Jundī Sābār, medical school of 87, 237–8
juwārishin (digestive mixture) 29

Kaʿb b. Mālik al-Khazrajī 163
Kaʿb b. Māmah 136–7, 198, 241
kaʿb game 241
Kāmil b. ʿIkrimah 212
Kathīr b. Ismāʿīl 7
Khabbāb 4, 227
khabīṣ 55n, 157
recipe for 235
Khālawayh *see* Khālid b. Yazīd Khālawayh al-Mukaddī
Khālid b. ʿAbdullah al-Qasrī 54–5, 235
Khālid the Haggard (al-Mahzūl) 54–5
Khālid Khū Mahrawayhi 22
Khālid b. Naḍlah 55
Khālid b. Ṣafwān 128, 130–1
Khālid b. al-Walīd 145
Khālid b. Yazīd Khālawayh al-Mukaddī 233–4
narrative of 36–44
Khalīdiyyah robbers 41
al-Khalīl al-Salūlī 87–9, 97
al-Khansāʾ al-Sulamiyyah Tumāḍir 224
Khāqān b. Ṣubayḥ 16–17, 90, 112, 231
Kharrabiyyah sect 41
al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī 65, 124n
Khātūn 39
Khawtaʿah of Banū Ghufaylah 166
khaysh (bowers) 86, 237
Khāzim b. Khuzaymah 83
khazīrah broth 214–15
Khidāsh b. Zuhayr b. Rabīʿah 214
Khizānah al-Ḥikmah (Treasury of Wisdom) 229
Khurāsān 25n
tales of people from 5, 14–24
al-Khuraymī, Abū Yaʿqūb 112, 145–6, 159
khushknān bread 104
recipe for 238
Khusraw Anūshirwān, Emperor 237
Khusraw Parwīz (Abarwīz), Emperor 183
Kīak people 45
al-Kinānī 177
al-Kindī 1, 14–15, 35, 226
tale of 67–78
kitchens 69
kneading of dough 8

Koprülü (Abu 'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn al-Wazīr Abū ʿAbdullāh Muḥammad) xxv
Kulayb b. Wāʾil b. Rabīʿah 61
al-Kumayt b. Zayd b. Khunays/Akhnas 205
Kuthayyir b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān 158

lamps, miserliness with 15–18
Laqīṭ b. ʿAbd al-Qays al-Fazārī 162, 202
laughter 6, 105
lawyers 20n
lawzīnaj cake 156
recipe for 242
Laylā al-Shaybāniyyah al-Nāʿiṭiyyah, tale of 30–1
learning, money contrasted with 12–13
lichens 235
loans 183–6, 188
lodgers 68–76
Luqman al-Ḥakīm 132n
lye 21n

Maʿabad 68
Maʿdān b. Jawwās al-Kindī 224
magic 38, 152, 155, 242
Maḥfūẓ al-Naqqāsh 105–6
al-Mahlūl 102
al-Majnūn 219–20
al-Makkī, Abū Isḥāq 45, 52, 54, 96–7, 105, 112, 173–4, 234
Makraz/Mikraz b. Ḥafṣ al-Akhyaf 126
Mālik b. ʿAmr al-ʿĀmirī 242
Mālik b. al-Mundhir 48
Mālik b. al-Muntafiq al-Ḍabbī 194
al-Maʿlūt. b. Badl al-Qurayʿī al-Saʿdī 171
Maʿmar b. al-Muthannā Abū ʿUbaydah 54, 235
al-Maʾmūn, Caliph xxv, 229, 231
Maʿn b. Aws 204
Manshim 166
Mansʿūr b. al-Nuʿmān 186
Maʿqal b. Ḍirār b. Sinān al-Shammākh 159
Mardawayh b. Abī Fāṭimah 41
markh pith 27
al-Marrār al-Ḥammānī 220
al-Marrār b. Saʿīd al-Faqʿsī 211–12
Maʿrūf al-Dubayrī 218
Marwān b. Abī Sulaymān b. Yaḥyā b. Abī Ḥafṣah 158
Maymūn b. Qays al-Aʿshā 84–5, 93, 101n, 213
Mazdak 4n, 227
mendicants 36–44, 104, 115, 144, 152, 164–5
Merv 25n
  tales of people from 14–24
Messiah 91, 93
Mikraz/Makraz b. Ḥafṣ al-Akhyaf 126
al-Minjāb b. Abī ʿUyaynah 60
Mirbad market xxv
Miryam al-Ṣanā 25–6
miscarriage 67, 237
miserliness 1–7, 226–7
  in clothing 9–10, 23–4, 30–1, 49, 51, 88–90, 98, 108, 119–21
  in food 8–9, 13–16, 19–21, 26–30, 33–6, 44–7, 49, 51–67, 77–88, 91–7, 99–106, 108–19, 124–5, 127–32, 138, 155–9, 172–80, 189, 239–40
  with lamps 15–18
  in money 11–13, 22, 25–6, 29, 32–3, 50–1, 76–7, 90–1, 113, 119, 122–3, 139–41, 148–53, 159–72, 180–6, 190
  in refusal of hospitality 31–4, 193–4
  see also individual misers
al-Miṣrī 115
money 26n, 71n, 103–4n
  counterfeit 71
  miserliness with 11–13, 22, 25–6, 29, 32–3, 50–1, 76–7, 90–1, 113, 119, 122–3, 139–41, 148–53, 159–72, 180–6, 190
moon, influence of 95
Mosque of the Basrah Folk, story of the Habitués of 24–9
Muʿādhah al-ʿAdawiyyah 140
Muʿādhah the ʿAnbarī 27–8
Muʾarriq al-ʿIjlī 7
Muʿāwiyah, Caliph 11, 58, 130, 132, 228
Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Rabīʿah al-Jarmī 196
Muḍarris b. Ribʿī 218
al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī 191
al-Mughannī 177
al-Mughīrah b. ʿAbdullāh b. Abī ʿAqīl al-Thaqafī 129–30
al-Mughīrah b. Ḥārith al-Muṭṭalib 135
al-Mughīrah b. Shuʿbah 83, 201
al-Muhallab b. Abī Ṣufrah 59, 83, 93
muḥallabīya, recipe for 238–9
Muḥammad (The Prophet, The Apostle) 9–10, 13, 62, 74, 76–7, 95, 101, 136, 141–2, 144–6, 152, 162–5, 169, 240
Muḥammad b. ʿAbbād 188–9
Muḥammad b. Abi 'l-Muʾammal, tale of 78–86
Muḥammad b. ʿAmr al-Jammāz 61
Muḥammad al-ʿArūḍī 177
Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath 127
Muḥammad b. Ḥassān al-Aswad 103

Muḥammad b. al-Jahm al-Barmakī 117
Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-Nūshirwānī 227
Muḥammad b. Munādhir 196
Muḥammad b. Mustanīr (Quṭrub) 44
Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā 60
Muḥammad b. Yasīr al-Riyāshī 22–3, 159, 203n, 205, 207–8, 233
Muḥammad b. Ziyād al-Ziyādī 12
Mujāshi b. al-Rabaʿī 146
al-Munjāb al-ʿAnbarī 148
al-Muntajiʿ b. Nabhān 203
murrī sauce 45
  recipe for 234
Mūsā b. Janāḥ 109–10, 173
Muṣʿab b. ʿUmayr b. Hāshim b. ʿAbd al-Manāf 199
Musāwir b. Hind 215
Musāwir al-Warrāq 185n, 191
Muṭarrif b. Shikhkhīr al-Ḥarash 169
al-Muʿtaṣim, Caliph 229
Muʾtazilīs xxv, 75n
muthallathah gruel 33
al-Muthannā b. Bashīr 17
Muways b. ʿImrān 16, 48, 60, 117, 133, 181–2, 231
Muzabbid (?Abū Isḥāq Muzabbid) 7, 228

nabaq (*Zizyphus spina-christi*) 24, 85n
nabīdh (date wine) 41, 52–3, 84–5, 114
al-Nābighah 192, 223–4
Najm, Wadīʿah xiv, xxv
al-Namir b. Tawlab 142–3, 210
Nasreddin Hoca 240
al-Naẓẓām, Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār xxv, 19–20, 24, 31, 44, 112, 232
newsmen 3
Noah (Nūḥ) 91
al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir 11
Numaylah b. Murrah al-Saʿdī 131
Nuṣayb 183
Nuwayrah al-Māzinī 131–2

Pellat, Charles xiii–xiv, xxv
perfume and incense 48–50, 107, 191
Persians 172
Pleiades 219, 245
pregnancy
  miscarriage 67, 237
  timing of 95
property (buildings) 23
  demolition of as punishment 72
  feast on completion of 193
  lodgers in 68–76

al-Qādimī 187
Qalʿī swords 39
Qārūn 39
al-Qāsim 175–6
Qaṭris corsairs 40
Qays b. ʿĀṣim b. Minqar 142
Qays b. Zuhayr 83
Qīqāniyyah robbers 40
Quṭrub the Grammarian (Muḥammad b. Mustanīr) 44

Rabīʿah b. Dhiʾbah b. Qasiyy b. Munabbih al-Thaqafī 162
Rāfiʿ b. Huraym 118
Rāfi b. ʿUmayr al-Mikhashsh 38
rāk (*Salvadora persica*), fruit of 14
Ramaḍān 128
Ramlah of Fāʾid 217
al-Rashīd, Caliph Harūn 182n, 227
Rāshid al-Aʿwar 172–3
recipes 232–9, 242
remedies 26–7, 130
Rescher, O. xiii
rice 110–11
al-Riyāshī, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Yasīr 22–3, 159, 203n, 205, 207–8, 233
robbers 36–44, 155
Rubaym b. Hazn al-Hilālī 187n

Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ 201
Saʿd b. Mālik b. Sinān al-Khudrī 200
Ṣafwān b. Muḥriz 5
Sahl b. Hārūn 1, 32, 35, 112, 133, 160, 229–30
  epistle of 5, 8–14
Ṣaḥṣah. 4, 227
Saʿīd b. al-ʿĀṣ 204
Saʿīd b. Aws al-Anṣārī (Abū Zayd) 65, 118
Saʿīd b. Ḥātim 127
Saʿīd b. Zayd b. ʿAmr b. Nuqayl 161
Sajjādah 23–4, 233
sakhīnah flour 214–15
Ṣakhr b. ʿAbdullāh al-Khaythamī al-Hudhalī 143, 193–4, 211
Ṣakhr b. Aʿyā al-Asadī 222n
Salāʾah b. ʿAmr b. Mālik al-Afwah al-Awdī 203
Ṣālih. b. ʿAffān 35, 109
Ṣālih. b. Ḥunayn 7

Salm b. Qutaybah b. Muslim al-Bāhilī 60, 135, 144, 181
salt seasoning 64
Sariyy b. Mukarram 173
Ṣaʿṣaʿah b. Ṣawḥān/Ṣūḥān 130, 166
sawīq gruel 157
Sayf Dhī Yazan 213n
seals 9, 76
security deposits 182
Serjeant, R. B. xiii–xv
shad-fish (*shabbūṭah*) 85–6, 237
Shamiriyyah 187
shamlah mantle 244
shanā lichen 235
al-Shanfarā of Azd 92n
shaving of the head, feast of 193
Shurayh. b. Aws 216
al-Sidrī, Abū Nābaqah Muḥammad b. Hishām 85
sikbāj 19, 104
  recipe for 232
Simāk b. ʿAmr al-ʿĀmirī 242
Sinān b. Abī Ḥārithah 183
singing girls 182
slave, as compensation for miscarriage 67, 237
sleds 69
Smith, Rex xv
Sophism 4n
stars 219, 244–5
storytellers (*qāṣṣ*) 37
  profession of 7n, 228
stupidity 4
substance, nature of 97, 239
Suʿdā bint ʿAwf al-Murriyyah b. Khārijah 10
Suḥaym b. Ḥafṣ 66
Sulaymān, Caliph 101n, 130
Sulaymān al-Kathrī 105
Suwayd b. Haramī 211

ṭābāhaj 19–20, 189
recipe for 232–3
tables 20
ṭafshīlah ragout 57, 107
  recipe for 236
Ṭāhir al-Asīr 172
Ṭāhir b. al-Ḥusayn (Dhu ʾl-Yamīnayn) 18, 231–2
Taʿillah ibn Musāwir 174
Ṭalḥah b. ʿUbaydillāh al-Taymī 10, 230
tamarisk 104
Tamīm al-Dārī 38
Tamīm b. Muqbil 143
Tammām b. Abī Nuʿaym 112–13
Tammām b. Jaʿfar, tale of 99–102
tannūr pot 24
Ṭarafah b. al-ʿAbd 190n, 194
Tarīm xxv
Tasnīm b. al Ḥawāri 60
teeth 99–100
textiles 25n, 49n, 124
al-Thaʿālibī 226–7
al-Thaqafī
  Abu ʾl-ʿĀṣ's epistle to 133–46
  Ibn al-Tawʾam's retort to 146–71
Thaqf 34
Thawb b. Shah.mah al-ʿAnbarī 118, 211, 216–17
al-Thawrī 27, 35
tale of 87–96
thieves 36–44, 155
Thumāmah b. Ashras xxv, 15, 23, 174–6, 186–7, 230–1
al-Tirimmāh. b. Ḥakīm 195
truth and falsehood 4
Ṭufayl al-ʿArāʾis 65–6
Ṭufayl b. ʿAwf b. Kaʿb al-Ghanawī 199–200
turbans 199

ʿUbayd b. Ḥuṣayn al-Numayrī al-Rāʿī 197, 199, 212
ʿUbaydullāh b. al-Ḥasan 73
ʿUbaydullāh b. ʿIkrāsh 146
Ubayy b. Kaʿb 44
al-ʿUdhāfir b. Zayd 206
Uḥayḥah b. al-Julāh. 159–60
al-ʿUjayr al-Salūlī 200
ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Caliph 8, 10–12, 61–3, 93, 126–7, 143n, 152, 157, 163, 166, 169–70, 179–81, 230, 242
ʿUmar b. Yazīd al-Asadī 131
ʿUmayr b. Shuyaym b. ʿAmr al-Quṭāmī 197
Umayyah b. Abī ʾl-Ṣalt 195, 243
Umm Fīlawayh, tale of 98–9
ʿUrwah b. al-Ward al-ʿAbsī 161
ʿUthmān, Caliph 170, 228, 230
ʿUthmān b. Abi ʾl-ʿĀṣ 162
al-Utrūsh 155n
ʿUwaymir b. Mālik b. Qays b. Umayyah 230
al-Uyaynah b. Ḥiṣn al-Fazārī 136n

Van Vloten, C. xiii, xxv

Walīd al-Qurashī 31
water 9, 20n, 24–5, 69, 82–3, 96–7, 100, 197–9

weddings 191
weeping 5–6
weights and measures 25–6n, 41n, 60n

Yaḥyā b. ʿAbdullāh 44
Yaḥyā b. Khālid 12, 105, 127
Yaḥyā the Weeper 5
Yāqūt b. ʿAbdallāh 233
Yazīd b. Abān al-Raqāshī 7, 228
Yazīd b. Ḍirār Muzarrid 223
Yazīd b. Hāshim 187
Yūsuf b. Kulli Khayr 102
Yūsuf b. ʿUmar al-Thaqafī 62, 235

zadw game 69
Zakariyyā 103
Zawāqīl thieves 40
Zayd b. Jabalah 12
Ziyād b. Abī-hi 10, 62, 126, 181
Ziyād b. Fayyād. 209
Ziyād b. Jarīr al-Bajalī 129
Ziyād b. Salmā/Sulaym Abū Umāmah al-Aʿjam 219
Ziyād b. ʿUbaydillāh al-Hārithī 129
Zosimus of Panopolis 165n
Zubaydah b. Ḥumayd, tale of 29–30
al-Zubayr b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib 213
al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām 135, 170
Zuhayr b. Abī Sūlmā 178n, 183
Zuhayr b. Nuʿaym al-Bābī 170
Zuṭṭ people 40

CENTER FOR MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO CIVILIZATION

The Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization, a non-government, non-profit making cultural organization, strives to lead Muslims and non-Muslims alike to a better understanding of the Muslim contribution to civilization and to a better knowledge of Islam.

Located in Doha, State of Qatar, the Center has the warm support of its patron, the Emir of Qatar, H.H. Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani. Presenting accurate translations of some of the best known works of the most eminent Muslim savants, spanning the 800 years of the classical period of Islamic civilization (*c.* 620 AD to *c.* 1500 AD), since its establishment in 1983 the Center has produced nine volumes covering five major works in different fields of knowledge.

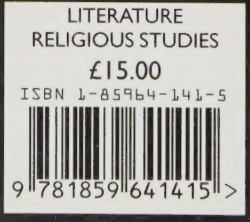
For further information on the work of the Center, all correspondence should be directed to

The General Supervisor
Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization
P.O. Box 327
Doha
State of Qatar
Arabian Gulf

THE *Book* OF *Misers*

Al-Jāḥiẓ (AH 160/AD 776 to AH 225/AD 869) was one of the greatest exponents of Arabic prose of all time. His scholarship, the breadth of his interests, and his ability to express his ideas and arguments with vigour and humour were outstanding; *The Book of Misers* is his comical masterpiece, and one of the earliest works of fiction from the Islamic world.

Generosity is regarded by Arab society as one of the principle virtues, and this satire on miserliness has a clear social purpose. With his acute powers of observation, light-hearted scepticism, his comic sense and satirical turn of mind, he ridicules both individuals and groups such as schoolmasters, singers or scribes. In addition, there is much incidental detail about traditional culture and conduct. It will appeal to the modern reader for its comical power, sometimes covert and sometimes straight-faced, which remains undiminished 1,100 years after it was written.

The present translation by the late Professor R. B. Serjeant makes this work available to the English-speaking world for the first time. Professor Serjeant was one of the most eminent Arabic scholars in Britain, and since the 1950s he had used extracts from this work when teaching Arabic to his students, as he felt it gave great insight into traditional Arabic society.

LITERATURE
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
£15.00
ISBN 1-85964-141-5